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JAPAN A WORLD ENIGMA

by Frederic
Austin
Ogg



*The Strange Story of the One
Great Military Power of Asia*

THE one first-class power in all Asia, the one non-European power which in the past hundred years has met and defeated a European nation of the highest rank, the one independent nation outside of Europe to be involved

in the present international conflict, is Japan. For forty years the Mikado's empire has been a world enigma. The phenomenally rapid emergence of its people from isolation and medievalism still causes bewilderment. And in its life and in-

THE ENGRAVING ON THIS PAGE SHOWS THE FAMOUS FUJI-SAN, OR FUJIYAMA, THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN IN JAPAN—ITS BEAUTIFUL VOLCANIC CONE RISES 12,365 FEET ABOVE SEA-LEVEL

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THE SHINTO SHRINE AT KAMEIDO, IN THE SUBURBS OF TOKYO—THIS VIEW IS TAKEN FROM THE BRIDGE SHOWN ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE

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stitutions it presents a combination of Oriental with Occidental characteristics which defies analysis.

On this account the Japanese find themselves, in exceptional degree, the prey of cross-currents of public opinion. They are alternately lauded and reproached, courted and suspected, feared and insulted.

The empire consists of a far-flung, volcanic archipelago—the crest of a huge submarine mountain-chain—stretching from the vicinity of Kamchatka on the northeast to the colony of Formosa on the southwest, a distance of more than two thousand miles. The islands have never been counted officially, but there are upward of four thousand of them,



WISTARIA BLOSSOMS AND PICTURESQUE SEMICIRCULAR BRIDGE IN THE GROUNDS OF THE SHINTO SHRINE AT KAMEIDO—SOME OF THE CLUSTERS OF WISTARIA ARE FULLY TEN FEET LONG

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and five or six hundred are of appreciable size.

The six of principal importance—Honshiu, Shikoku, Kiushiu, Yezo, Sakhalin, and Taiwan (Formosa)—comprise ninety-four per cent of the total area; and crescent-shaped Honshiu—also known as Hondo, and, less correctly, as Nippon—alone comprises fifty-three per cent. The aggregate area, estimated at one hundred and seventy-six thousand square miles, is approximately four times that of Pennsylvania, and nearly fifty per cent larger than that of Great Britain and Ireland. These figures are exclusive of Korea, which, with an area of eighty-four thousand square miles, was annexed to the empire in 1910.

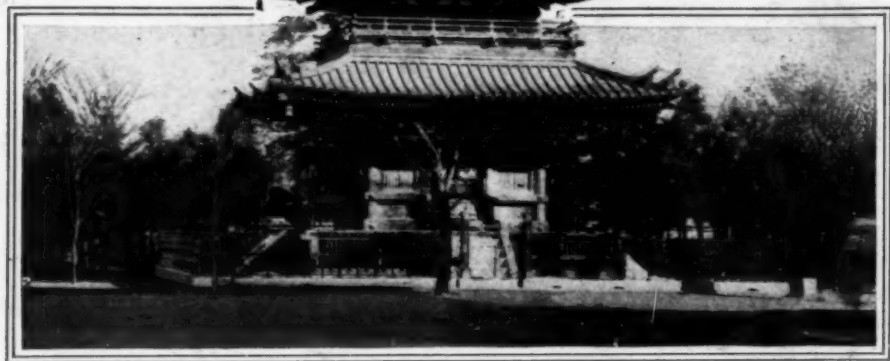
The population of Japan proper—fifty-two millions in 1912—is one-sixth

thermore, it is increasing rapidly. Korea and Formosa contain about sixteen million people, making a total of sixty-eight millions for the whole empire.

The earliest history of Japan is veiled in obscurity no less impenetrable than that which surrounds the beginnings of Egypt or Greece. Only in the third century of the Christian era was the art of writing introduced into the country, probably from

China; and only in the fifth century was it first employed in the recording of events. Moreover, the earliest chronicles were destroyed by fire, and the documents upon which has been built up the entire fabric of primitive Japanese history date from the eighth century. In them mythology is inextricably intertwined with authenticated fact.

In a variety of



PAGODA IN UENO PARK, TOKYO—UENO PARK, FORMERLY THE ESTATE OF A DAIMIO, OR FEUDAL CHIEF, IS ONE OF SEVERAL LARGE PUBLIC PLEASURE-GROUNDS IN THE JAPANESE CAPITAL

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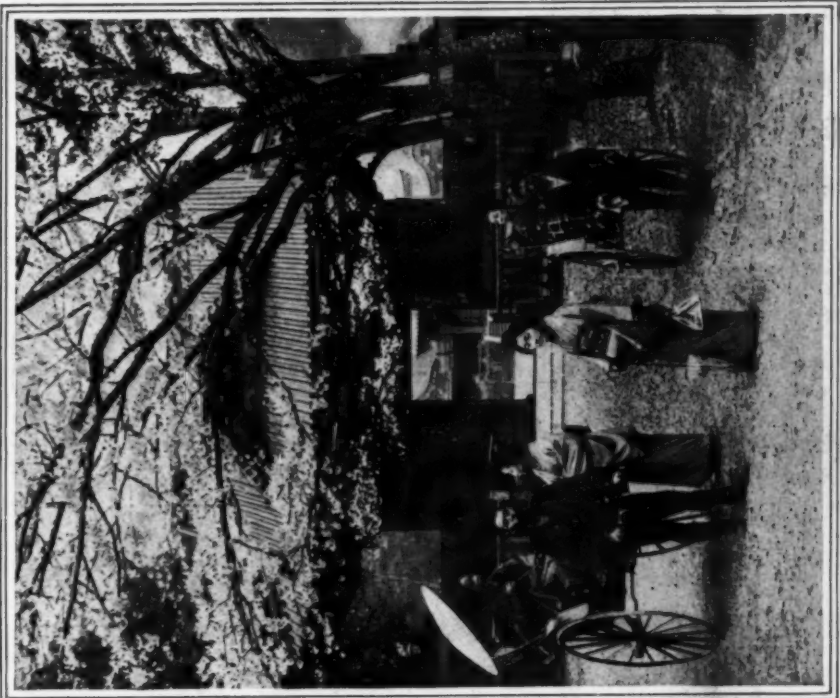
that of China, three-eighths that of European Russia, and a little more than one-half that of the United States. Fur-

ways Japan resembles Britain. An insular position has assured a certain detachment, security, and independence not



THE MOAT OF THE IMPERIAL PALACE IN TOKYO, WITH CHERRY-TREES
IN BLOSSOM

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APRIL IN JAPAN—JINEKISHAS AND CHERRY-BLOSSOMS IN SHIDA
PARK, TOKYO

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THE BANK OF JAPAN, TOKYO—THIS IS ONE OF THE MODERN BUILDINGS OF TOKYO, DESIGNED BY THE JAPANESE ARCHITECT TATSUNO KINGO, AND COMPLETED IN 1895



THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, TOKYO—THIS IS SITUATED IN THE AKASAKA WARD, IN THE SOUTH-WESTERN DISTRICT OF THE JAPANESE CAPITAL

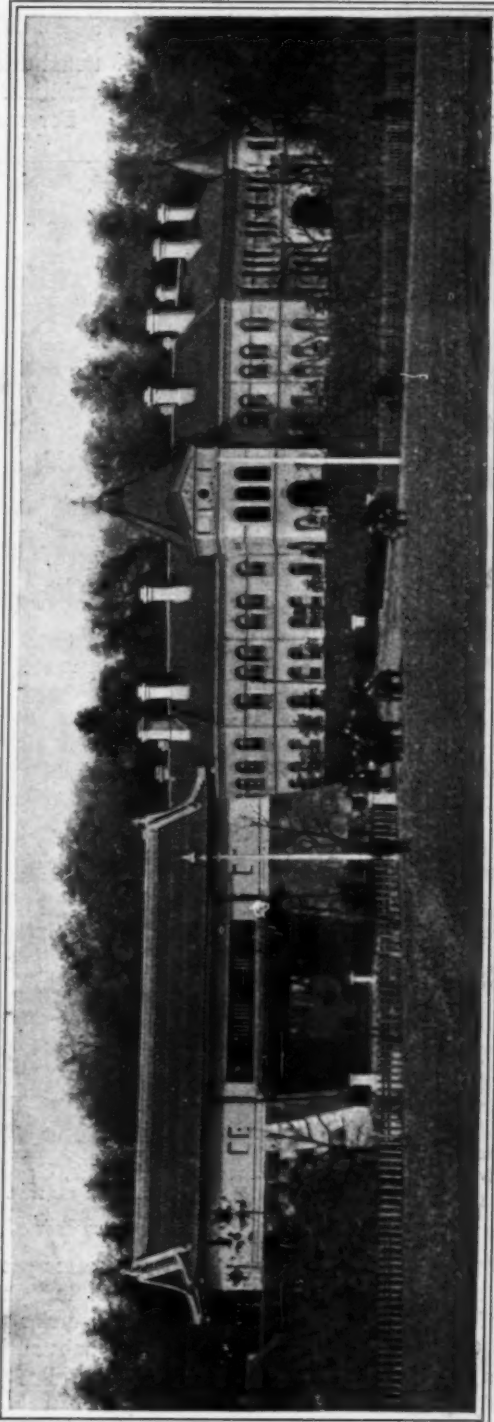
ordinarily enjoyed by continental countries. And the people represent a fusion of primitive native tribes with successive invaders and conquerors.

The ethnical character of the primitive tribes is more uncertain in Japan than in Britain. But the invaders, who played the rôle of the Angles and Saxons and Normans in the western island-kingdom, are known to have been chiefly Malaysian peoples from southern China, the Malay Archipelago, and India. There was also Mongolian immigration from Korea, northern China, and Mongolia. Indeed, it is doubtful whether any nation in the world has incorporated a greater variety of racial elements than has Japan. The Malaysian element, however, unquestionably dominates the national type.

JINMU, FIRST EMPEROR OF JAPAN

According to Japanese chronology, the empire was founded in 660 B.C., about the time of the Athenian lawgiver Draco, or of the captivity of Israel. Tradition says that the founder was a Malay chieftain who landed with his band on the island of Kiushiu, subdued the natives, pushed on to Honshiu, and there, in the year mentioned, and under the name Jinmu Tenno, was crowned emperor. The story is unsupported by historical evidence, but there is no reason why it may not be true. At all events, the Emperor Jinmu is still honored with two national holidays every year.

The authentic history of Japan begins, however, more than a thousand years after Jinmu. Politically, it is a story

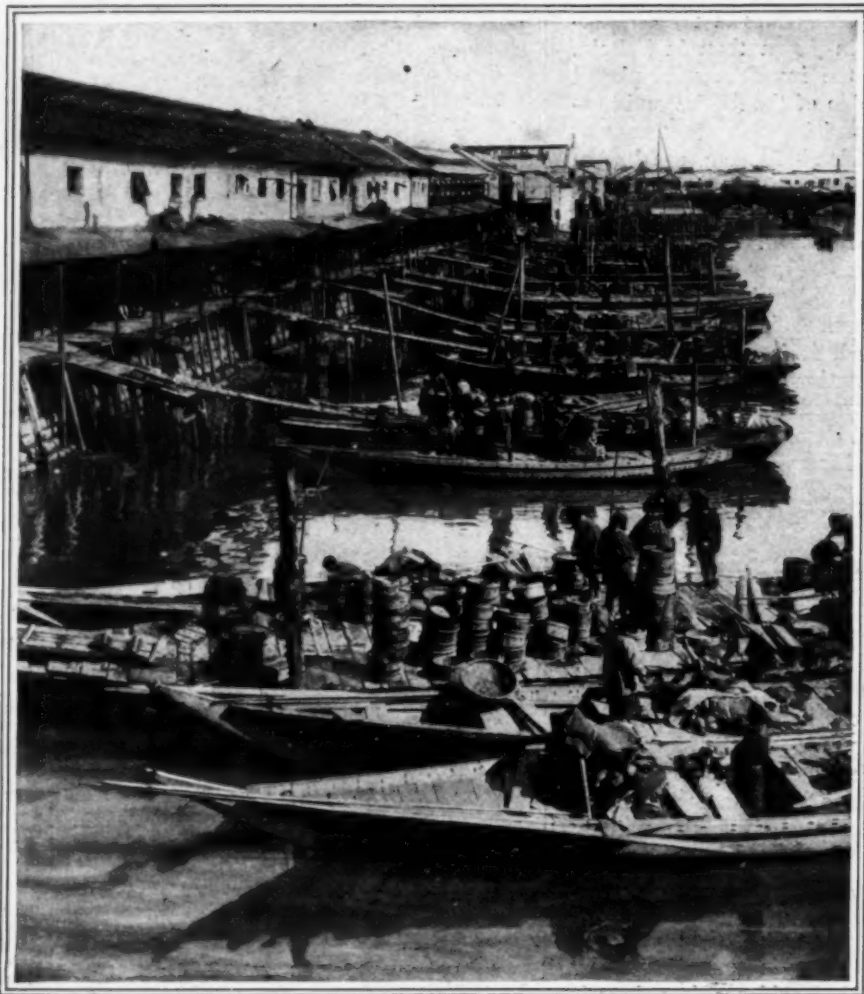


THE IMPERIAL PALACE, TOKYO.—THIS WAS FORMERLY THE RESIDENCE OF THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNS, AND DATES FROM 1456, BUT THE PRESENT BUILDING IS MODERN, COMPLETED IN 1888—IT IS SURROUNDED BY A MOAT AND IS NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

of powerful monarchy, succeeded by feudal decentralization, and eventually by restored monarchy under a modern form of constitutionalism. Culturally, it is a record of the introduction of

only in the nineteenth century to a policy of modern receptiveness, international friendliness, and even world-wide ambition.

For many centuries the empire, ruled

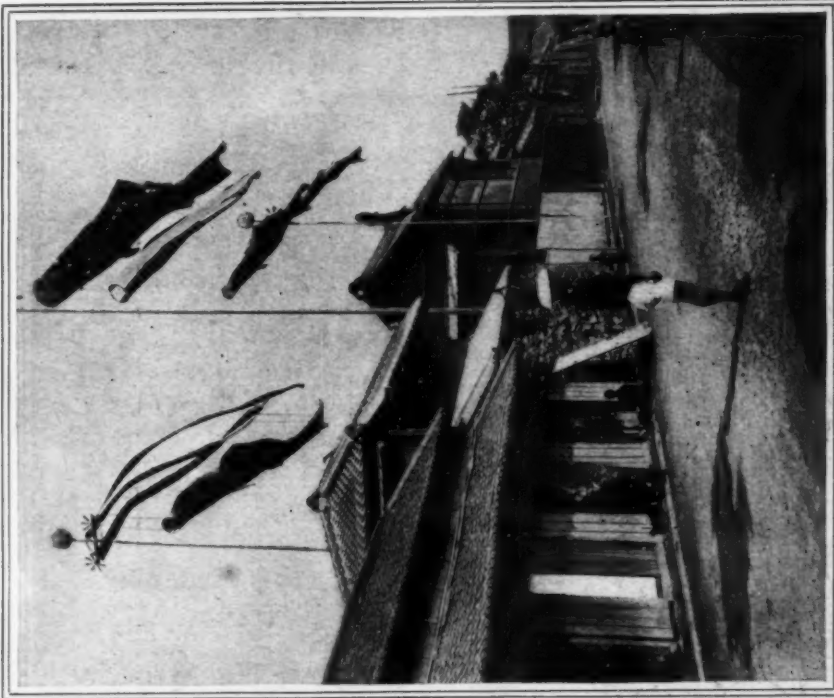


THE UWOGASHI, OR FISH-MARKET, OF TOKYO, ON ONE OF THE MANY CANALS OF THE JAPANESE CAPITAL

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

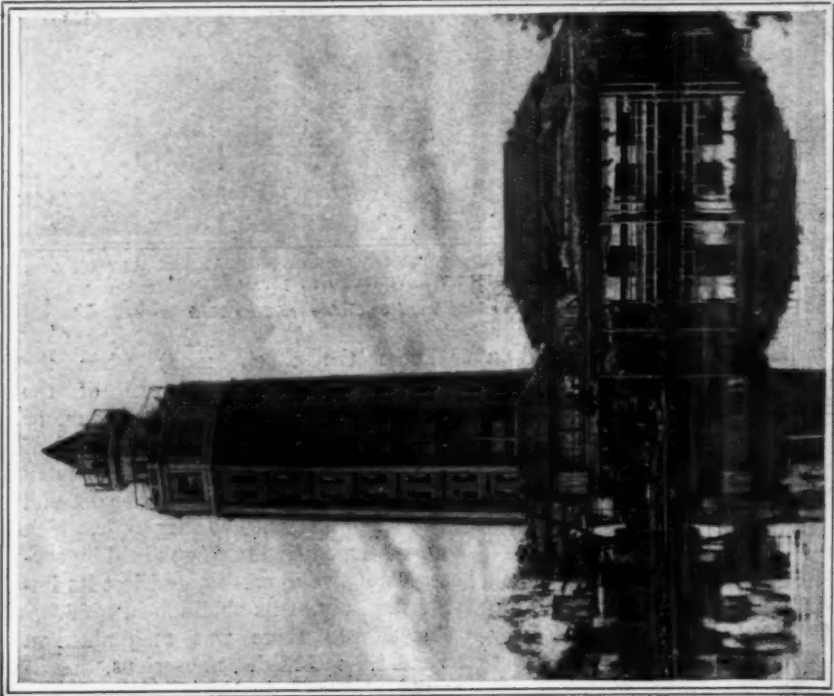
literature, music, art, and religion from China and Korea, and of rich development of these along novel and productive lines. On the side of foreign relations, it is a story of natural isolation and jealously guarded seclusion, giving way

after 792 A.D. from Kyoto, was an absolute monarchy. By stages, however, the warrior and land-holding class gained substantial independence and control of public affairs. As early as the ninth century a powerful family belonging to



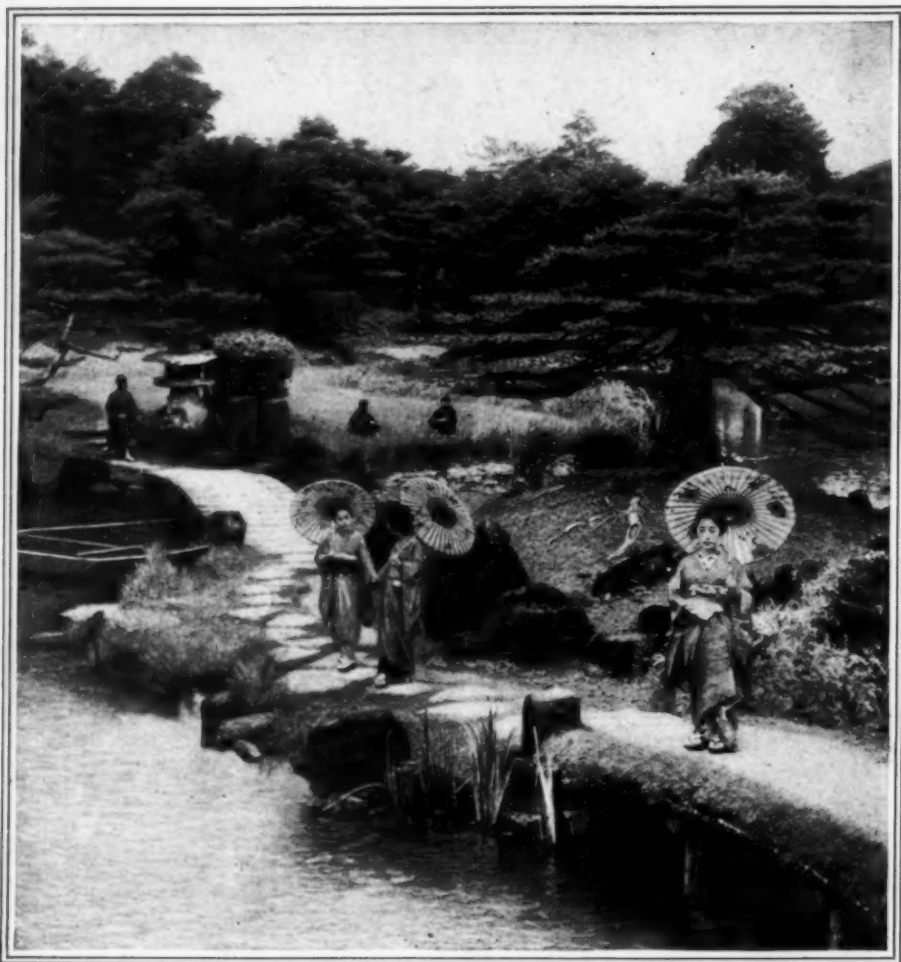
PAPER FISH FLYING IN CELEBRATION OF THE BOYS' SPRING FESTIVAL
IN TOKYO (MAY 5)

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York



THE TWELVE-STORY TOWER, TOKYO, ONE OF THE FEW TALL BUILDINGS
OF THE JAPANESE CAPITAL

From a photograph by Brown Brothers, New York



A TYPICAL JAPANESE GARDEN SCENE—THE ART OF LANDSCAPE GARDENING, ESPECIALLY ON A MINIATURE SCALE, IS HIGHLY DEVELOPED IN JAPAN

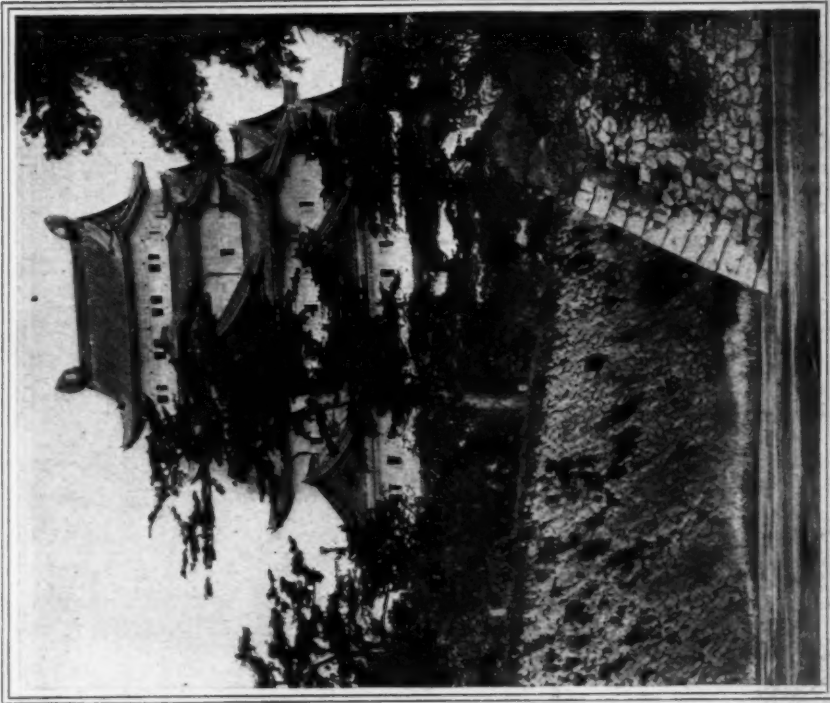
From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

this class, the Fujiwara, acquired a perpetual regency and gathered under its control all the offices of importance.

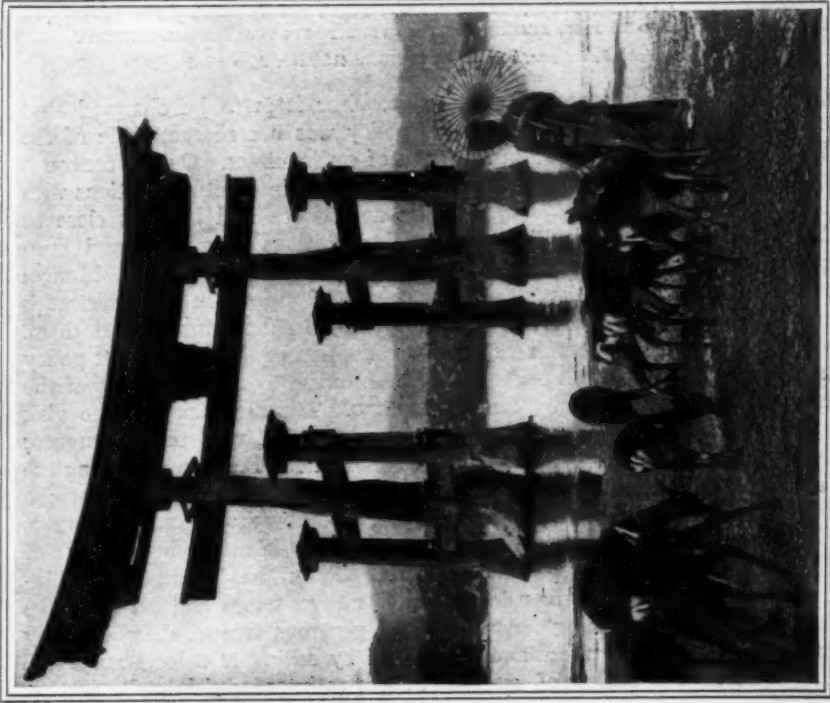
At the middle of the twelfth century the Fujiwara were overthrown. But the event, far from bringing a revival of vigorous centralized rule, inaugurated an era of four hundred and fifty years of almost continuous civil war, during which the country took on a feudal aspect no less pronounced than that exhibited by the contemporary society of western Europe.

From the time (1192) when the emperor bestowed upon one of the powerful nobles the title of shogun, or commander-in-chief, the nominal head of the state was a nonentity, and the country was governed entirely by the shogun and other subordinates. The shogunate, which early became hereditary, was held by several successive dynasties, and lost its importance only at its abolition in 1868.

At Kyoto there was maintained a splendid, secluded, mysterious, semi-sacred court; but the government was



THE CASTLE OF NAGOYA, A FEUDAL STRONGHOLD BUILT IN 1608-1703—
ON THE TOPMOST GABLES ARE TWO GREAT GOLDEN DOLPHINS
From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



A TORII, OR SHINTO GATE, ON THE ISLAND OF MIYAJIMA, IN SOUTHWEST-
ERN JAPAN, FAMOUS FOR ITS ANCIENT SHRINES AND ITS TAME DEER
From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



THE MIHASHI, OR SACRED BRIDGE, NIKKO, OVER WHICH, DURING HIS VISIT TO JAPAN IN 1879, GENERAL GRANT REFUSED TO PASS, DESIRING NOT TO VIOLATE ITS TRADITIONAL SANCTITY

From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York

conducted from the shogun's residence. Until the opening of the seventeenth century this likewise was at Kyoto; but the Tokugawa shoguns transferred it to Yeddo, now known as Tokyo.

Beneath the shogun was the military aristocracy, comprising the Daimios, the governors of provinces, and the proprietors of great estates. Beneath these were the Samurai, or warrior-retainers, fitted out with coats of mail, helmets, and cuirasses such as were worn by the knights of the European Middle Ages. And still lower were the merchants, artisans, and peasants, who were of no importance politically. This organization of society remained intact until past the middle of the nineteenth century.

The most important aspect of the rule of the Tokugawa shoguns, dating from 1603, was the deliberate adoption and rigid enforcement of the policy of ex-

clusion. For it is to be observed that this policy was not characteristic of the Japan of earlier times. On the contrary, commercial and intellectual relations with China and Korea had been as close as natural conditions permitted, and even a threatened conquest by the Mongol conquerors of China in the thirteenth century had not long interrupted them.

The adoption of the exclusionist policy is traceable directly to the coming of the Europeans. The first European to visit the island empire was the Portuguese navigator Mendez Pinto, who, during the course of a voyage from Siam to Macao in 1542, was thrown by adverse winds upon a small island lying south of Kiushiu. From the hospitable and inquisitive natives Pinto and his comrades received generous treatment, which they rewarded by selling to a local noble the first firearms introduced into the empire.

The news of the discovery spread among the Portuguese settlements, and in the course of a few years as many as seven trading expeditions were despatched from Macao, Goa, and other points to the island of Kiushiu. The Portuguese were followed by the Spaniards, who likewise were freely admitted.

THE EARLY MISSIONARIES IN JAPAN

Impelled by the report that the Japanese were "very desirous of being instructed," there came to the island of Kiushiu, in 1549, the great missionary apostle of the Jesuits, Francis Xavier. With the aid of a native who had learned the Portuguese tongue, Xavier and two companions traveled through Japan, and within the space of two years won more than a thousand converts. Everywhere they were cordially received. Xavier died in 1552, but the work went on, and it is said that within thirty years there were in the empire two hundred churches and fifty thousand converts. Japan seemed in a fair way to become a Christian nation.

From a seventeenth-century Spanish official in the Philippines comes the story of a shogun who was urged by the Buddhists to suppress the Christians.

"How many sects may there be in Japan?" he asked.

"Thirty-five," was the reply.

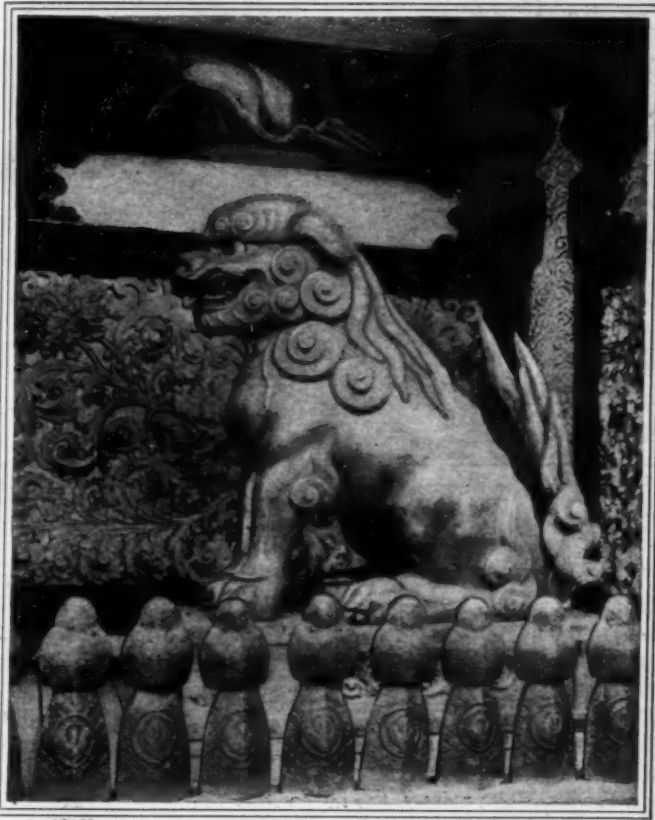
"Well," observed

the astute potentate, "we can easily bear with thirty-six."

Whatever its authenticity, the anecdote fairly reflects the general official attitude toward Christianity.

The triumphs of the new religion led directly to the despatching of the first Japanese embassy to Europe. This delegation, comprising three youthful nobles representing Christian princes, and attended by an imposing suite, was sent to Rome in 1582 to pay respects to the head of the Catholic Church.

In the course of their travels the ambassadors were received and honored by the sovereigns of Spain, Portugal, and other Catholic states, and there was created the impression that Japan was



THE SACRED DOG IN ONE OF THE ANCIENT TEMPLES OF NIKKO, A CITY WHICH IS ONE OF THE GREAT RELIGIOUS CENTERS OF JAPAN

From a copyrighted photograph by C. H. Graves

about to become a great extra-European bulwark of Catholicism. Returning to their own country after an absence of eight years, the travelers were received in audience by the shogun and were showered with fresh honors.

pain of death to quit Japan within twenty days."

The edict was but indifferently enforced, and few of the priests withdrew; but missionary work was thereafter less successful. In 1591 twenty thousand



TURRETS OF THE DAIGOKU-DEN, AT KYOTO—KYOTO WAS FOR MORE THAN A THOUSAND YEARS THE CAPITAL OF JAPAN

From a copyrighted photograph by C. H. Graves

In point of fact, however, the Christian conquest was but superficial, and already when the embassy reached Nagasaki a reaction was setting in. By repeated charges that the Christians were overzealous in pressing their faith upon the people, and that they were destroying national temples and inflicting indignities upon the Buddhist priests, the authorities were aroused. In 1587, after an investigation, the shogun issued an edict ordering all Christian priests "under

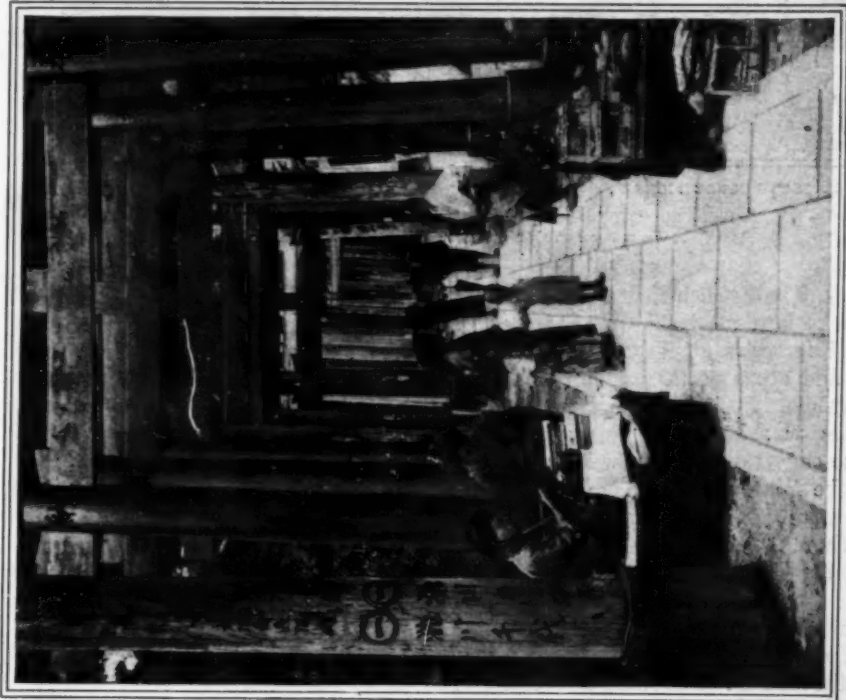
converts were put to death amid fearful tortures.

So long as they obeyed the laws of the country, foreign traders continued to be welcome. And the opening of the seventeenth century witnessed the entrance of two new European peoples, the Dutch and the English, into Japanese commerce. A Dutch vessel, driven by storm, first reached Japan in 1600, and within a few years the Dutch East India Company was cutting heavily into the Portuguese



HATTO, OR LECTURE HALL, OF THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOKOKU-JI,
KYOTO, FOUNDED IN 1392

From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



BIRD-SELLERS AND FORTUNE-TELLERS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE
TEMPLE OF INARI, KYOTO

From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



A COLOSSAL BRONZE FIGURE OF AN OLD-TIME JAPANESE WARRIOR, THE CHARACTERISTIC DECORATION OF A GARDEN IN KYOTO

From a copyrighted photograph by C. H. Graves

monopoly. The English East India Company broke into the traffic in 1613, and soon had factories at Nagasaki, Osaka, Yeddo, and other ports.

Meanwhile, fresh trouble with the Christians was brewing. Execution of Japanese converts was resumed in 1613, and in the following year there was promulgated an edict ordering that foreign priests should be deported, that churches should be demolished, and that all converts should abjure the new faith.

Again circumstances prevented full enforcement; but in 1637 the blow fell in decisive fashion. Following a rebellion

in which Christians were implicated, the shogun issued an edict expelling not only the missionaries but all foreigners, prohibiting their further admission to the country, and forbidding the Japanese themselves to go abroad. The order was executed to the letter, and thus was Japan, in the phrase of a Dutch chronicler of the day, "shut up."

The country was destined not again to be opened to foreign intercourse until past the middle of the nineteenth century. By 1639 not a single Spaniard, Portuguese, or Englishman—merchant or missionary—remained in the land. It

was understood, too, that all native Christians had apostatized or had been put to death; although when the ban was raised, more than two hundred years later, it was discovered that a body of several thousand had secretly clung to their faith.

The one remaining point of contact with the outside world was Nagasaki, where the Chinese were permitted to trade, and where a few Dutchmen, not belonging to the so-called "evil sect," were allowed to remain. The Dutch quarters were confined to the little peninsula of Deshima, artificially built in the harbor of Nagasaki. Only eleven Dutchmen, and they under close surveillance of Japanese police, were permitted to reside there, and only two Dutch vessels were permitted to visit the port in any year. To prevent the egress of Japanese to foreign lands, the construction of vessels large enough to ride the high seas was prohibited.

TWO CENTURIES OF SECLUSION

The adoption of the policy of isolation resulted from no innate propensity of the Japanese people to exclusiveness. It was the outcome of unsatisfactory relations with Europeans, the fault lying almost entirely with the avaricious and bad-mannered traders, the arrogant and ambitious missionaries, and the haughty and aggressive naval officers.

More particularly, it was the product of opposition to the conquest of the country by a new religious sect. Fundamentally the policy was anti-Christian, not antiforeign. In the Japanese mind foreign intercourse and Christian propaganda became, and long remained, synonymous; and it was because all Westerners were thought of as *bateren*—priests—that hostility to them arose and persisted.

During the long era of seclusion the empire became again essentially self-sufficing. Agriculture flourished, industry developed on simple lines, domestic commerce was multiplied many fold, and

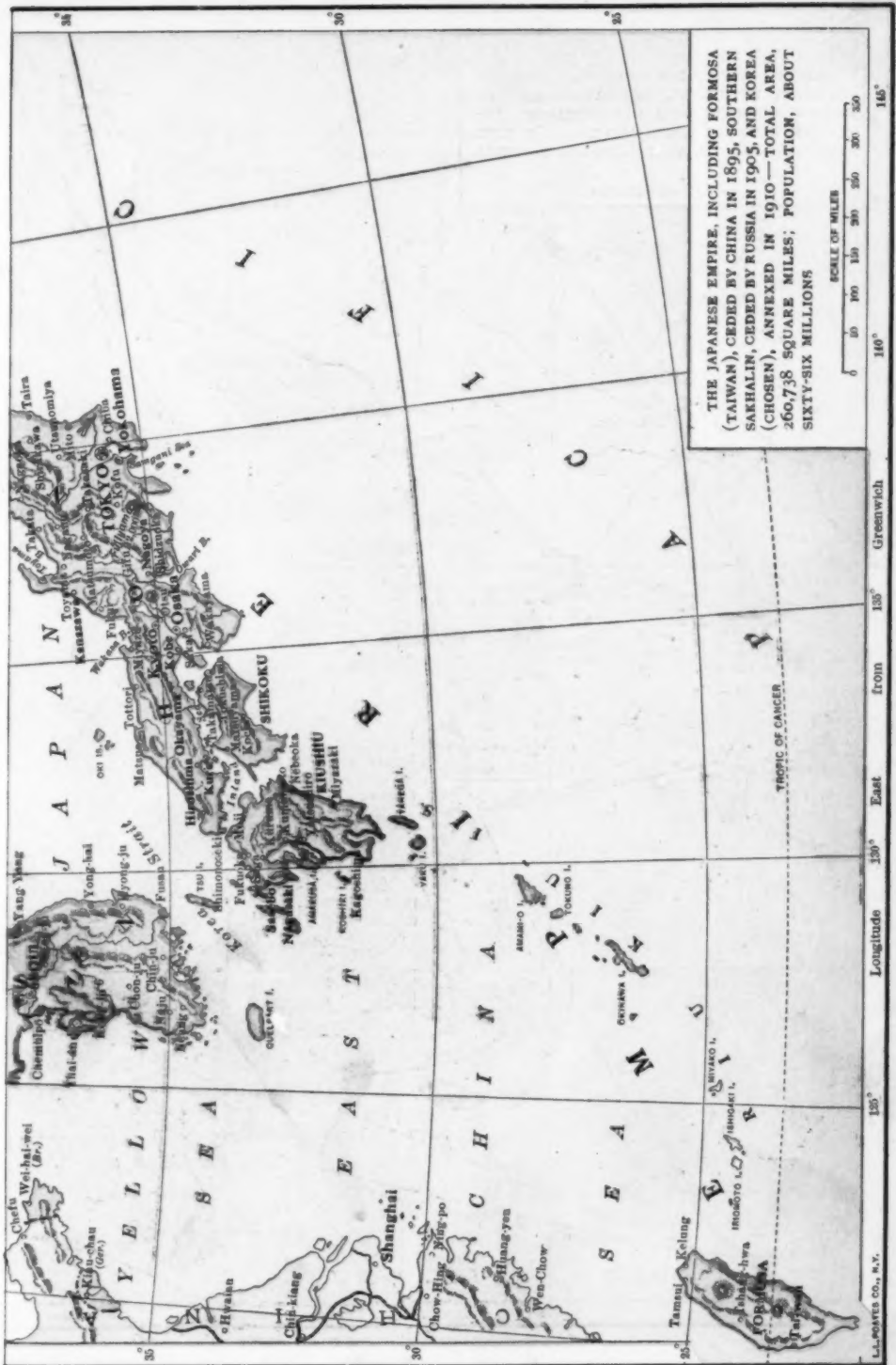
the people, generally peaceful and contented, did not care—as a Dutch visitor to Nagasaki about 1692 informs us—for commerce or communication with foreign lands, "because such was the state of their country that they could subsist without it."

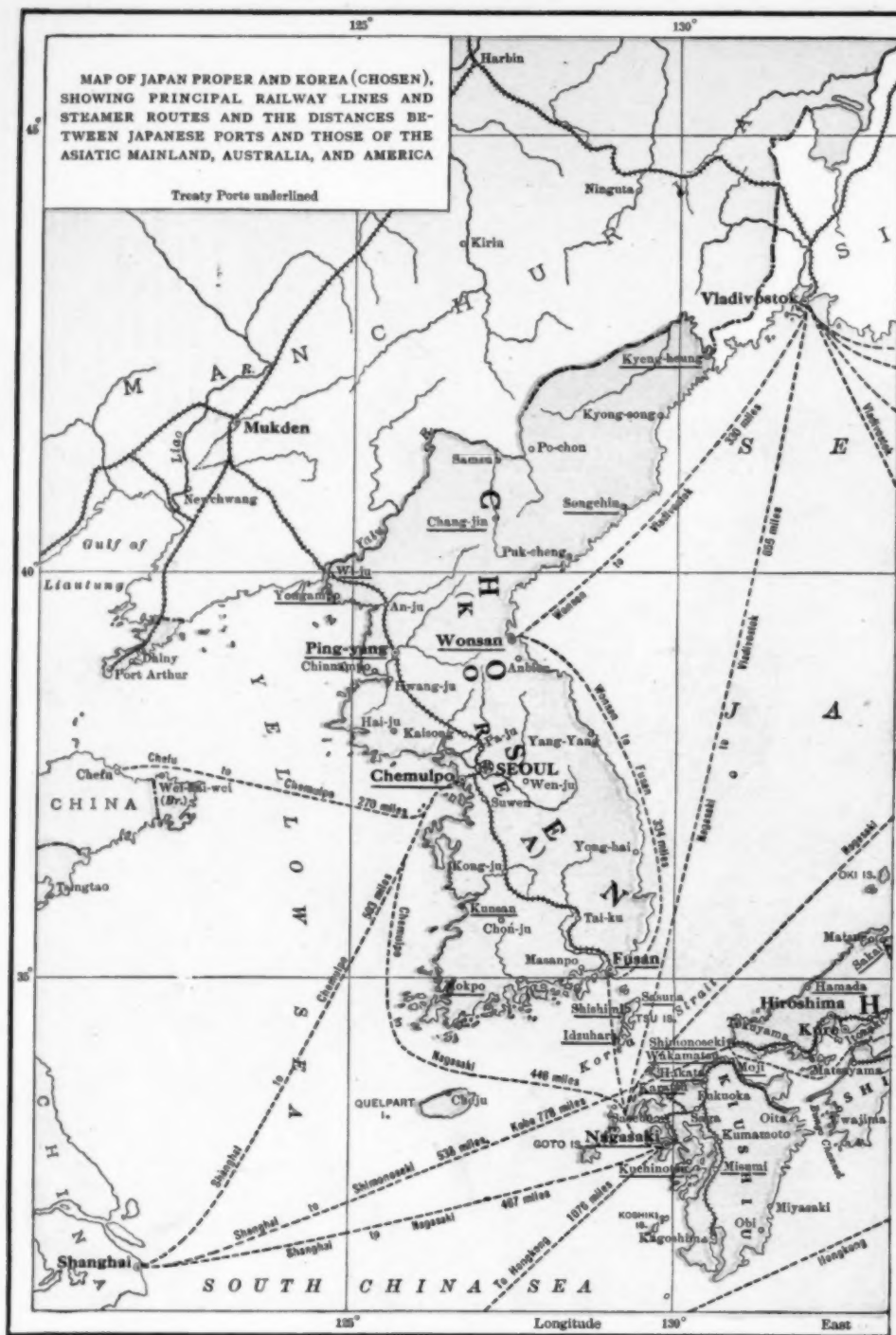
The effects of seclusion have been interpreted differently by equally authoritative writers. On the one hand, it is emphasized that in the seventeenth century, at least, Japan had little to learn from Occidental nations in religious tolerance, in international morality, in social amenities and etiquette, and in artistic and literary achievement; while seclusion contributed, in an age of world-wide aggression, to the preservation of national autonomy.

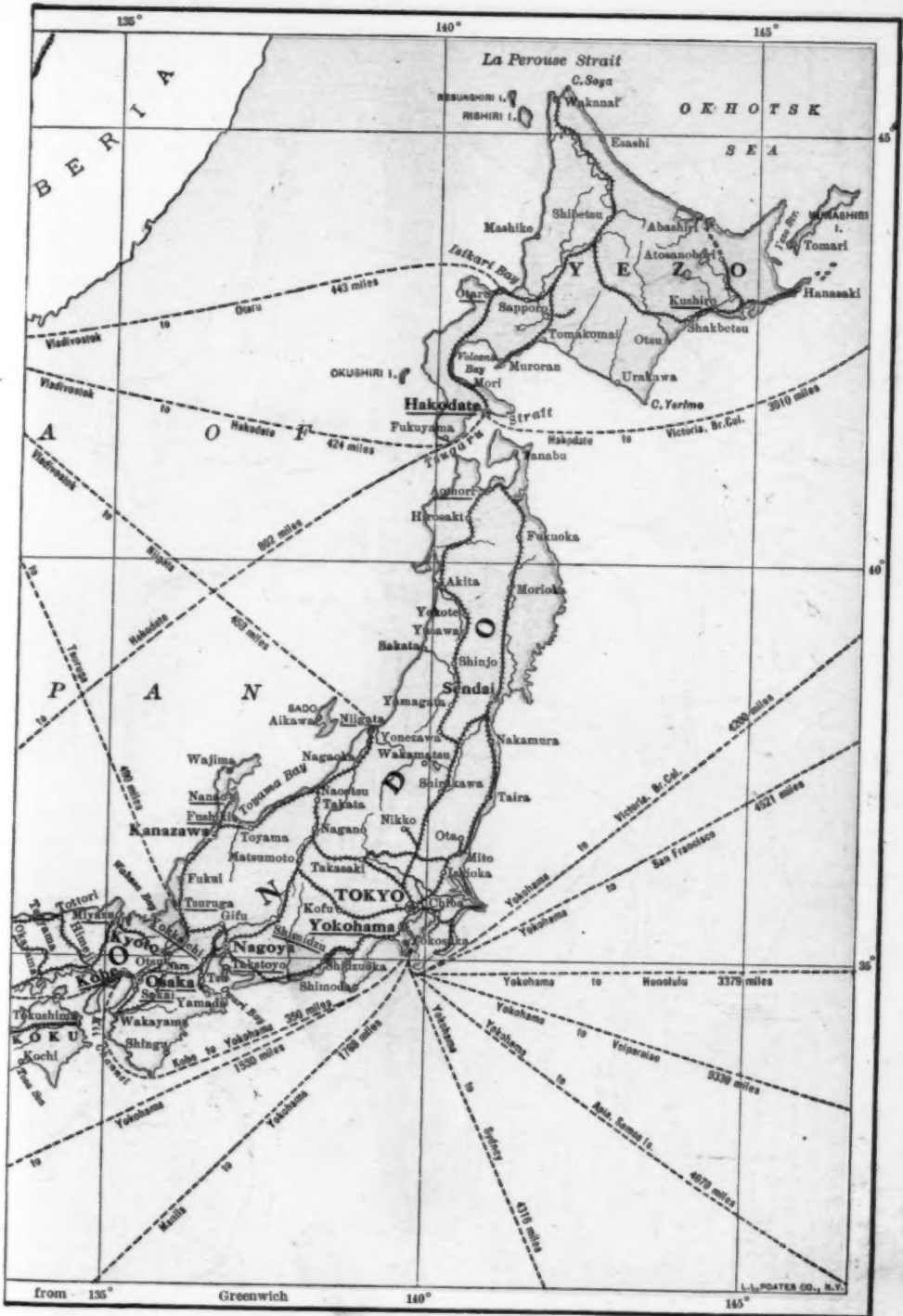
On the other hand, it is pointed out with much force that for more than two hundred years the empire was cut off completely from the competition which sharpens wits and from the interchange of ideas which makes for intellectual and material advancement. "She stood comparatively still while the world went on, and the interval between her and the leading peoples of the Occident in matters of material civilization had become very wide before she awoke to a sense of its existence."

The shift of policy which brought Japan again into touch with the outside world had the appearance of being accomplished abruptly. In reality, however, it came as a result of circumstances long ripening and of a conviction slowly and reluctantly formed. It was an outcome of pressure applied both from within and from without.

The internal influences were chiefly certain schools of thought which, cherishing advanced ideas, gradually gained a hold upon the ruling classes and impelled them to embrace more enlightened opinions and to adopt more liberal policies. Pressure from the outside took the form of visits, threats, and entreaties from representatives of at least half a dozen foreign powers.









The nation whose acts first gave warning of the possibility of external complications was Russia. Prior to the close of the eighteenth century Muscovite emissaries descended from Kamchatka and Siberia and laid hold upon the northernmost territories of Japan; and thereafter the Russian peril was never wholly dispelled.

The partial unlocking of the doors of China by Great Britain in the Opium War of 1840-1842 created apprehension that Japan might be similarly dealt with. In 1846 the master of a French ship which touched at one of the minor groups of islands sought to persuade the natives to accept a French protectorate as a safeguard against British aggression. The Dutch at Deshima likewise sounded warnings against British ambitions. By the middle of the century the ruling classes of the empire were having their eyes opened rapidly to the danger of foreign attack, as well as to the unpreparedness of the country to meet it.

It was for the United States, however, that the honor of actually breaking down the walls which had hedged the island empire was reserved.

The first American vessel to visit Japan was the *Eliza*, which, temporarily in service of the Dutch East India Company, appeared at Deshima in 1797. For five decades attempts of American merchantmen to open trade on their own account failed. During this period, however, the development of the American whaling industry off the coasts of Alaska and in the seas of China and Japan accustomed the Japanese to the aspect of foreign vessels, and not infrequently American sailors cast away on Japanese islands were rescued and permitted to return to their country. Occasionally such unfortunates were subjected to cruel treatment, and there arose serious need of an understanding upon the matter.

In 1837 an American vessel, the *Morrison*, bearing shipwrecked Japanese mariners, was despatched to Yeddo, in the hope that the shogun's government

might be induced to relax its rules as to foreign intercourse. It was driven off with cannon shot, and not one of the passengers was permitted to set foot on the islands. Eight years later the *Manhattan*, bound on a similar errand of mercy, was allowed to put ashore its charges; but the captain was ordered, with emphasis, never again to come to the Japanese shores.

Private enterprise having failed, the government at Washington took up the problem. In 1846 Commodore Biddle was despatched to the islands with a ninety-gun ship and a sloop, to make formal request for a commercial treaty. He was permitted to anchor in the Bay of Yeddo, but was told that no treaty could be had, and that visits from American vessels were not desired. In 1849, however, the *Preble* went to Nagasaki and rescued American sailors who had been held as prisoners.

By 1850 the American government was disposed to take strong measures. The whalers sorely needed opportunity to resort to Japanese harbors when in distress, or for supplies. The cruel treatment received by shipwrecked sailors called for alleviation. Commercial interests were demanding the opening of new Oriental markets; and the discovery of gold in California had lent fresh interest to Pacific affairs in general.

PERRY'S EXPEDITION TO JAPAN (1852)

After full discussion, President Fillmore's Cabinet, led by Daniel Webster, determined to send to Japan a squadron which should present demands respecting both commercial privileges and the treatment of American sailors, and should make a demonstration of such character as to create an impression of earnestness. The mission was entrusted to a naval officer of large experience, Commodore Matthew C. Perry, brother of the victor of Lake Erie in 1813.

Preparations for the expedition were carefully made. Books on Japanese subjects were gathered in the United States,



THE DAIBUTSU, OR GREAT IMAGE OF BUDDHA, AT KAMAKURA, A COLOSSAL BRONZE STATUE COMPLETED IN 1252—THE EYES ARE SAID TO BE OF PURE GOLD

From a copyrighted photograph by C. H. Graves

and Europe. Charts, to the value of thirty thousand dollars, were purchased from Holland. Scientists and interpreters were engaged. Specimens of American wares were collected and arranged for advantageous exhibition.

Furthermore, the cooperation of the Dutch trading-station at Deshima was solicited and secured. The world at large was made fully acquainted with the nature and purposes of the undertaking, and was entirely in sympathy, although doubtful whether the desired results could be obtained.

On November 24, 1852, Perry's squadron, consisting of four ships of war, sailed

from Norfolk, and on July 8, 1853, it made its appearance in Yeddo Bay. The effect of its coming was remarkable. The country was thrown into veritable panic. Custom and formalism were forgotten.

For the first time in seven centuries the shogun sent a special envoy to the Mikado to consult about the policy of the government, and for the first time in the history of the nation men of all classes were invited to come forward with suggestions as to the steps which should be taken to safeguard the ancestral land. The accouterments of war were brought forth, and by order of the government special prayers were ordered for the pres-



INTERIOR OF THE SOSHI-DO, OR FOUNDER'S TEMPLE, MINOBU—THIS IS A CELEBRATED BUDDHIST TEMPLE DATING FROM THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



A PICTURESQUE STREET IN IKAO, A POPULAR JAPANESE SUMMER RESORT, SITUATED IN A MOUNTAINOUS DISTRICT ABOUT EIGHTY MILES FROM TOKYO

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KIRIFURI-NO-TAKI, OR MIST-FALLING CASCADE, ONE OF SEVERAL
PICTURESQUE WATERFALLS NEAR NIKKO
From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



THE CRATER OF ASO-SAN, AN ACTIVE VOLCANO NEAR KUMAMOTO, IN
THE ISLAND OF KIUSHU
From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



TYPICAL JAPANESE SCENERY, SHOWING HOW CLOSELY THE SOIL IS CULTIVATED, WITH THE HILLSIDES TERRACED FOR TEA-PLANTATIONS AND THE PLAINS CUT INTO IRRIGATED RICE-FIELDS

From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



BOATING ON THE KATSURA RIVER, WHICH RISES IN A PICTURESQUE MOUNTAIN DISTRICT NEAR KYOTO AND FLOWS PAST THAT CITY INTO THE BAY OF OSAKA

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ervation of the empire and the destruction of the aliens.

The course adopted by Perry was firm but conciliatory. He refused to repair to Nagasaki to be received. He demanded, and after much parleying obtained, an interview with an official of the first rank, to whom he entrusted a letter from

cause it was generally believed that they were futile. The nation in its present state, it was realized, could not cope with the foreigners. Discretion, therefore, proved the better part of valor; and in February, 1854, when Perry returned with a fleet of ten ships, an interchange of courtesies and formalities extending



JAPANESE FISHERMEN ON THE NAGARA RIVER, WHERE IT IS THE ANCIENT CUSTOM TO ATTRACT FISH WITH A BONFIRE AND TO USE TRAINED CORMORANTS TO CATCH THEM

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President Fillmore, addressed to the Mikado, and requesting the privileges which the United States proposed to obtain. He did not press for a treaty, but after ten days sailed away, informing the authorities that in the following spring he would return for a definite reply.

The months which followed the departure of the Americans were filled with anxious consultations and feverish military work. Preparations for resistance, however, were half-hearted, be-

over six weeks culminated in the signing of a treaty pledging the Japanese to deal in a kindly manner with shipwrecked Americans, to permit American ships to anchor in certain ports, and to allow provisions to be obtained in Japanese territories.

The "opening of Japan" has been appraised correctly as one of the most notable feats of modern diplomacy. It was accomplished with the aid of a judicious show of force, yet without the



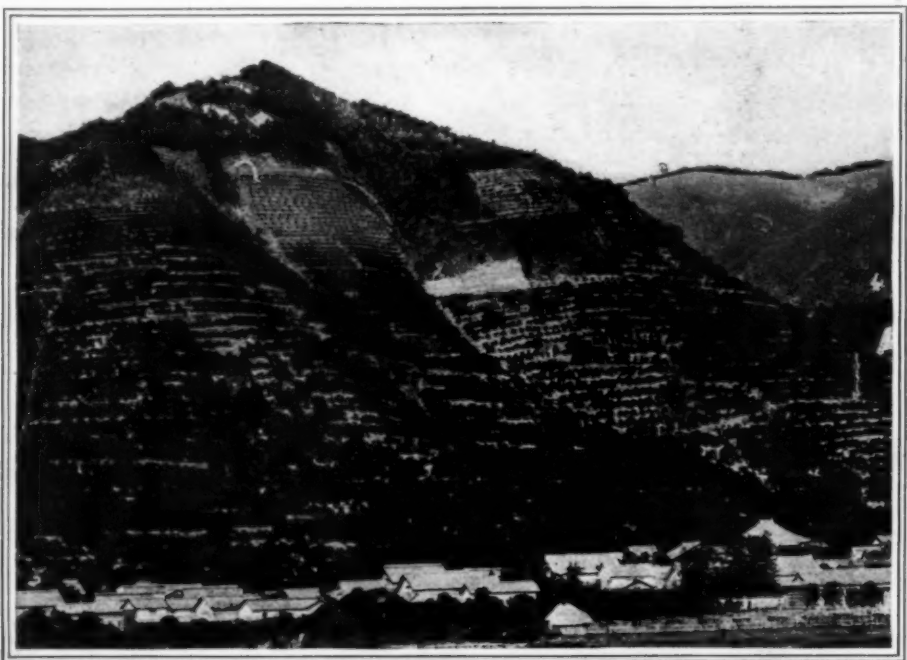
THE NATIONAL FLOWER OF JAPAN—A DISPLAY OF CHRYSANTHEMUMS AT
 TOKYO, WHERE MANY SUCH EXHIBITIONS ARE HELD
From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



THE LITTLE DAUGHTER OF A JAPANESE GENTLEMAN PLAYING ON THE
 KOTO, A HARP WITH THIRTEEN SILKEN STRINGS
From a copyrighted photograph by the H. C. White Company, New York



WEEDING AN IRRIGATED RICE-FIELD—RICE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CROP IN JAPAN, OCCUPYING MORE THAN HALF OF THE CULTIVATED LAND



A TERRACED HILLSIDE IN JAPAN, SHOWING HOW ALMOST EVERY FOOT OF THE SOIL IS UTILIZED TO THE FULLEST EXTENT

firing of a shot, and European peoples have been as ready to recognize the skillfulness of it as have Americans.

Nowhere is its timeliness more fully appreciated than in Japan. In 1855, Japanese commissioners could already assure Perry that his name would "live forever in the history of Japan"; and in 1901 there was dedicated, on the spot where the commodore first landed, a splendid monument, erected with funds contributed by Japanese people of all classes.

FURTHER OPENING OF THE CLOSED DOOR

Perry's treaty, however, marked only a beginning. It contained no authorization of ordinary commercial intercourse. Nor did similar treaties obtained by Great Britain in 1854, and by Holland and Russia in 1855; but under the leadership of the United States the nations pressed the advantage that had been gained.

In 1855 President Pierce appointed a New York merchant, Townsend Harris, consul-general at Shimoda, and instructed him to procure a general treaty of commerce. Harris's experiences during his mission, fully recorded in his "Journal," were romantic, and sometimes exasperating. By slow degrees he brought the authorities to comprehend and respect his rights as a foreign representative, and in 1857 and 1858 he procured two treaties.

The first of these agreements extended American privileges of residence in Japanese ports. The second stipulated that after July 4, 1859, commerce between Japan and the United States should be carried on freely at the port of Yokohama. This latter document was signed, after a ceremonious interview with the shogun, in defiance of the Mikado's orders.

It was agreed that the ratifications of the commercial treaty should be exchanged in Washington. To lend full effect to the transaction, as well as to facilitate acquaintance between the two

peoples, Harris arranged that a deputation of seventy-one Japanese officials and attendants should be sent to the United States. The embassy was transported on American war-ships to San Francisco, and thence by way of Panama to the cities of the Atlantic seaboard, which vied one with another in extending hospitalities and honors. Even before the visitors reached Washington their chief, Shimmi, wrote that he had already "amassed knowledge and experience enough to pile up a mountain or fill up a sea."

Upon ratification of the treaty, in 1860, Harris was commissioned as the first American minister to the Mikado's court. In 1858, also, commercial treaties were obtained by Great Britain, France, and Russia.

In Japan, however, there arose loud protest against the course which affairs were taking. If there was a party which favored freedom of intercourse, and believed that only by maintaining dealings with the outside world could the Japanese master the arts necessary to their own defense, there was also a powerful element, including most of the Daimios, which advocated uncompromising seclusion. This element rallied about the Mikado; and between the imperial court at Kyoto and the rival power of the shogunate at Yeddo there developed a state of friction which both accentuated the dual aspect of the Japanese governmental system and reflected the rift by which the nation was now divided.

For a decade the situation was confused in the extreme. Plots and counterplots, riots, assassinations, and "demonstrations" by European powers followed in swift succession. By 1863 the Mikado's party was so greatly in the ascendent that the shogun was compelled to issue an order for the expulsion of all foreigners. The diplomatic representatives of the treaty powers assured the court authorities, however, that any violation of treaty rights would precipitate war, and the order was rescinded.

It was a curious fact, of course, that the treaties had been concluded exclusively with the shogun, who legally was only a subordinate; and at the suggestion of the British diplomat, Sir Harry Parkes, the powers united in the demand that the instruments should be avowed and signed by the Mikado. Partly because the court at Kyoto was relaxing its opposition to foreigners, and partly because it feared the consequences of refusal, the desired action was taken in 1865.

This was a great gain, because opposition to the presence of "barbarians," and to the execution of the treaties, now ceased to be an evidence of loyalty to the Mikado, and became a violation of imperial edict. In 1866 the decree forbidding Japanese to visit foreign lands was voluntarily repealed.

The changes which were thus being accomplished attained their culmination in the so-called Restoration of 1868.

THE NEW POLITICAL ERA IN JAPAN (1868)

It had become the policy of the Kyoto government to rid itself, at least in a degree, of the encumbrances imposed by the shogunate; and in 1868, when the new emperor, Mutsuhito, undertook to prescribe limitations for his chief subordinate, the latter abruptly surrendered his powers, and the office was abolished. The emperor became once more the actual as well as the formal head of the governmental system.

To fortify the new arrangement the capital was moved to the late seat of the shogunate, Yeddo, now renamed Tokyo, which means "the capital of the East." The elements which opposed the change were forcibly suppressed; and in 1871, by an extraordinary act of renunciation, the Daimios voluntarily relinquished their titles, ranks, lands, and revenues, and made it possible for the country to be reorganized upon the plan of modern nations. Feudalism, after eight hundred years of existence in Japan, was totally extinguished, and the old warrior class of Samurai, numbering four hundred thou-

sand, descended to the level of ordinary citizens.

It is characteristic of the Japanese people to reflect long and then to act quickly. Such was the mode of the national reconstruction which set in after the events of 1868. Having at last decided to accept intercourse with the world, and to secure a recognized place among the nations, the country plunged forthwith into the study and adoption of foreign ideas, inventions, and institutions. In a public oath taken in 1869 the emperor set his people an example by pledging himself to "seek for wisdom in all quarters of the world."

The governmental bureaucracy which had existed prior to the feudal age was now revived; but there were added Western principles of constitutionalism, and by stages there was created an elective national legislature, consisting of a House of Peers and a House of Commons. Final organization was given to this body in the constitution of 1890.

Shintoism was proclaimed as the religion of the imperial household, but freedom of conscience was granted to the entire nation. A new aristocracy was created, but class privileges were abolished. Elementary education was made compulsory for both boys and girls above six years of age, and normal schools for the training of teachers were established in the several provinces. In 1872 universal and compulsory military service was established on French and German lines.

The spirit of reform permeated the entire nation, and manifestations of displeasure and reaction were only sporadic. Decade after decade, with marvelous assimilative power, the island empire continued to absorb the best things in the civilization of Europe and America.

In her newly formed relationships Japan found but one seriously unsatisfactory feature. That was the limitation imposed upon her sovereign power by the terms of the treaties of the shogunate epoch.

Certain of these limitations precluded the privilege of fixing tariff duties at will. Others, based upon the well-known principle of "extraterritoriality," exempted foreigners residing in the empire from the operation of Japanese criminal laws, gave them the privilege of trial before the consuls of their own countries, and required Japanese having claims against foreigners to enforce them in the consular courts.

By the Japanese these restrictions were considered to be inconsistent, not only with national sovereignty and dignity, but with the professed trust and friendship of the Western nations. As early as 1871 an embassy was despatched to the United States and Europe to obtain a revision of the treaties, but without success. Seven years later the United States concluded a new treaty on the lines desired by Japan, but its operation was conditioned upon similar action by the European powers. It was only in 1894, after eleven years of almost continuous negotiation, that the leader of these powers, Great Britain, was induced to take favorable action.

In a series of conventions beginning in 1894 it was agreed that from July, 1899, Japanese tribunals should assume jurisdiction over every person, of whatever nationality, within the confines of the empire; that all surviving restrictions upon trade, travel, and residence of foreigners should be removed; and that Japanese tariffs should be determined entirely by Japanese law. Only after the last of these instruments was ratified could the island empire feel fully relieved of stigma as being a "backward nation."

THE WAR WITH CHINA (1894-1895)

An event that did much to set Japan in a new light before the world was the war with China in 1894-1895. The bone of contention in this contest was the Hermit Nation, Korea.

From time immemorial Korea had recognized some dependence upon either China or Japan, or both, and during several centuries tribute was sent to Yeddo at the accession of each shogun. In a

treaty of 1876, consequent upon Korean refusal to pay further tribute, Japan recognized the independence of the country. By reason of her desire to absorb the weaker state, China took offense. A tortuous series of diplomatic and military complications, including the expulsion of the Chinese from a Korean province by Japanese arms, culminated in 1894 in a declaration of war.

The Chinese were overconfident, unprepared, and disunited; and in an eight-months' contest they were overwhelmed. The Japanese not only cleared Korea, but invaded Manchuria, occupied the Liaotung peninsula, seized its great fortress, Port Arthur, and prepared to advance on Peking. The efficiency of the transformed nation was demonstrated in a fashion which astonished the world.

Fearing the capture of their capital, the Chinese hastened to make peace, and on April 14, 1895, signed the treaty of Shimonoseki. By the terms of this instrument China consented to recognize the independence of Korea, ceded the Liaotung peninsula and Formosa to Japan, promised to pay a money indemnity of one hundred and seventy-five million dollars, and made large concessions of commercial privilege.

The Japanese, however, were not permitted to enjoy the full fruits of their sweeping victory. Russia, supported by France and Germany, came forward with the demand that, in the alleged interest of the peace of the Far East, the Liaotung peninsula should be restored to China. This meant giving up entirely the territory which had been gained on the mainland, including the coveted stronghold of Port Arthur.

No course was open save submission, and the demand was met; but the intervention was resented keenly, and with the Japanese it became a conviction that one day they would have to cross swords with the aggressive and menacing Muscovite power, and perhaps with other European nations. Thenceforward the army and navy were increased, and the resources of

the country were developed with a view preeminently to this contingency.

During the next five years Japanese resentment was deepened, and expectation of war was strengthened, by a remarkable series of events. One after another, the European powers proceeded to acquire in China precisely the sort of influence which had been forbidden to Japan.

First, Russia secured the right to prolong the Trans-Siberian railway across Manchuria to Vladivostok, and to build a branch line along the Liaotung peninsula to Talienwan; and in 1898 she acquired from China a twenty-five-year lease of Port Arthur, which the Japanese, three years earlier, had been compelled to give up.

In 1898 Germany secured a ninety-nine-year lease of Kiau-chau, and shortly afterward both Great Britain and France obtained ports in similar fashion.

In 1900, when it seemed not unlikely that China would be carved up by the powers as Africa had been, the Boxer insurrection afforded opportunity both for Japan and the United States to participate in the international movement for the relief of the legations. American influence was also actively exercised in behalf of the integrity of China and the preservation of the "open door" for trade.

In the new situation the European powers became less aggressive, and the tension was relieved. The Russian menace, however, remained and gradually acquired a fresh degree of seriousness. Railroad-building was being pushed in Manchuria; thousands of troops were being poured into the country; the fortifications of Port Arthur were being strengthened; the ultimate annexation of Manchuria, and probably of Korea, seemed clearly to be intended.

Opportunity for Japanese expansion and acquisition of markets on the mainland was evidently threatened. Indeed, the very security of the empire itself was believed to be in jeopardy. Japan de-

sired peace, but it continued diligently to prepare for war.

THE ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE (1902)

Within two years the empire's position was fortified in a most important way by the establishment of a defensive alliance with Great Britain. The treaty was signed in London by Baron Hayashi and Lord Lansdowne on January 30, 1902. It affirmed the purpose of the two nations to be the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Far East, and especially the independence and territorial integrity of China. It stipulated that in case either power should become involved in war concerning these matters, the other should remain neutral, unless the warring nation should be attacked by more than one state, in which event the second power should discontinue its neutrality and come to the aid of its ally.

The importance of the arrangement to the Japanese was that it assured them British assistance should they become involved in war in the East with two or more powers, and that it brought their country great prestige. Never before had an Asiatic nation been admitted to an alliance with a European state on terms of equality. Somewhat ominously, it was proclaimed almost at once from St. Petersburg and Paris that thenceforth the provisions of the Franco-Russian alliance would be applicable to the Orient.

Under pressure from the powers, Russia had promised to withdraw from Manchuria "as soon as lasting order shall have been established." Fortified by her British alliance, Japan now insisted upon the fixing of a period for the evacuation. In 1902 dates for a gradual withdrawal were incorporated in a convention. When the time arrived, however, only insignificant withdrawals were made, while there were put forward demands which, if complied with, would have fastened Russian control upon the contested territory yet more securely.

Throughout two years negotiations went on continuously, the entire world

watching with anxiety as the likelihood of war increased. Preparations were pushed assiduously in Japan, and the people were clamoring for a contest. Convinced at last that diplomacy was useless, the Mikado's government abandoned negotiations and began hostilities. On February 8 and 9, 1904, an army was thrown into Korea, and on the 10th war with Russia was declared.

THE WAR WITH RUSSIA (1904-1905)

The conflict lasted somewhat more than a year and a half, and on both land and sea involved engagements such as the world had not witnessed in many decades. The land operations were carried on in Manchuria and Korea, on soil which belonged to neither belligerent. Their most notable features were the capture of Port Arthur by the Japanese, after a ten months' siege, and the defeat of the main Russian army in the battles of Liaoyang and Mukden. The great exploits on the sea were the bottling of a Russian squadron at Vladivostok, the destruction of another at Port Arthur, and the annihilation of a powerful fleet sent out from the Baltic under command of Admiral Rojestvensky.

After the battle of Mukden, President Roosevelt instructed the American representatives at Tokyo and Petrograd to urge the inauguration of negotiations for peace. The suggestion was favorably received, first by Japan and soon by Russia, and on August 10, 1905, plenipotentiaries of the two powers were brought together under the hospitality of the United States, at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The principal Russian negotiators were Count Witte and Baron Rosen. The leading Japanese representatives were Baron Komura and Mr. (later Baron) Takahira.

The treaty of Portsmouth was signed September 5, 1905. Under its terms Japanese "political, military, and economic" interests in Korea were recognized to be paramount, although the country was to remain independent. Manchuria was to be evacuated by both

the Russians and the Japanese. Russia transferred to Japan her lease of Port Arthur and the Liaotung peninsula, and ceded the southern half of the island of Sakhalin, which prior to 1875 had been Japanese territory.

In view of the completeness of her victory, Japan's demands were not unreasonable. At no time was there insistence upon a money indemnity, and the negotiations were never in real danger of failure.

The restoration of peace found Japan clearly the dominant power of the Far East. Russian ambition was only checked, but it was certain to require many years in which to assume again a threatening aspect. And the remaining Western nations were sufficiently agreed upon the maintenance of the integrity of China to give fair insurance against an attempt of any one of them to acquire lordship in Eastern Asia.

Having waged two wars wholly or partly on account of Korea, Japan was determined to make the most of her newly recognized paramount interests in the inert kingdom. In this determination she was not opposed by American or European authorities.

At the outset she assumed control of the country's foreign and military affairs. Soon she undertook somewhat casual supervision of its internal administration. In 1907 she extended effective control over appointments and other governmental acts, and began the systematic introduction of needed reforms. Finally, in August, 1910, after losing her veteran statesman, Prince Ito, by assassination at the hands of a Korean fanatic, and after being compelled to lay out considerable sums in quelling a Korean insurrection, she put an end to an anomalous situation by annexing the country outright.

The new Korean territory, to which was restored the ancient name of Chosen, is a little smaller than Honshiu, the chief island of Japan, and a little larger than the American State of Kansas. It has a population of about fifteen millions. The former emperor retains a princely title

and receives an annual subsidy, but he has no longer even a shadow of political authority.

THE MARVELOUS ADVANCE OF JAPAN

Japan is to-day one of the world's great and rapidly advancing states. The transformation effected during the past half-century has been altogether remarkable, and has only been made possible by the exceptional aptness and capacity of the Japanese people.

The governmental system is essentially modern. It rests upon a written constitution; and if the authority of the emperor is large, and the ministers are in law responsible to the emperor alone, the powers of the Imperial Diet, or parliament—created only in 1890—are fast increasing and are already considerable.

The economic development of the country has proceeded at an astonishing pace. Although but one-sixth of the land is arable, agriculture has been extended and diversified in such degree that the output of foodstuffs continues to be adequate for the increased population. Industry has undergone a transformation analogous to that which took place in England in the later eighteenth century, and in France, Germany, and other countries in succeeding stages of the nineteenth. Oversea commerce has grown many fold. Since 1872 there have been built six thousand miles of railway, five-sixths publicly owned.

With extraordinary alacrity the Japanese have introduced in their country all known instrumentalities and means for developing large-scale manufactures, transportation systems, and financial institutions, such as banks and insurance companies. They have had the advantage of copying models or types already in existence in Western lands, but they have displayed marked capacity, not only in imitation, but in adaptation of foreign institutions and processes to Japanese conditions. They have fairly earned the sobriquet "the Yankees of the Orient."

Material advance has been paralleled

by the progress of education and culture. Before the Restoration a foreign book had to be smuggled into the country and read or studied secretly; and of intellectual contact with the world at large there was the smallest conceivable amount. But during the past fifty years information has been sought eagerly from all quarters of the globe, and books in scores of languages have been made familiar to the nation's men of learning. Book-publishing has become an important trade; and since 1872, when there was founded the first Japanese newspaper worthy of the name, there has been built up a periodical press numbering more than one thousand titles.

Popular education, formerly left to private and religious agencies, has been made a principal care of the state. An imperial rescript promulgated in 1872 enjoined that the agencies of popular instruction should be so widely diffused that thenceforth there should be "no village with an ignorant family, nor a family with an ignorant member." In the same year there was installed a public-school system modeled upon the educational arrangements of France.

In this field, the lofty ideal of the government has not been realized completely. Nevertheless, school attendance is compulsory for children between the ages of six and twelve; and, as the educational system exists to-day, it provides an admirable gradation of schools—elementary, middle, and high—capped by four imperial universities. Public education is strictly secular.

It has been said that no country owes so much to its art as Japan. At all events, until recently it was principally by her art and art products that the empire attracted the attention of the world.

Although they have no genuinely native word for either art or nature, the esthetic temper of the Japanese people is very pronounced. The art which they have carried to the highest degree of excellence is painting, which, indeed, their critics have always considered a form of poetry.

But their achievements have been remarkable in color - printing, bronze - working, wood - carving, ceramics, metal - working, lacquering, and enameling.

JAPAN TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

Since her defeat of Russia, Japan has been a figure of steadily increasing importance in world politics. Her resources and wealth have been growing. Her army and navy have been maintained on a high plane of efficiency. Her diplomacy has been energetic, and even aggressive. Her alliance with Great Britain has been maintained, and she has entered into *ententès* with France and her erstwhile enemy, Russia. The affairs of China, in particular, she has watched with hawk-like keenness and pertinacity.

It has been commonly understood that she has territorial ambitions. Her population grows with exceptional rapidity, and presses ever more closely upon the means of subsistence which the islands afford. For twenty years her people, in increasing numbers, have been migrating to distant lands in quest of employment and wages, farms, and permanent homes. Most of the emigrants have gone westward into Chinese and Russian territory on the mainland. Many have settled in Hawaii. Some have entered the continental United States, chiefly by way of the Pacific ports. A few have gone to Canada, to South America, to Australia and New Zealand, and to South Africa.

It has been supposed that the efflux will continue, and that unless it shall be checked by governmental restriction, some of the regions named may be inundated. Hence the efforts of recent years, in the British self-governing dependencies, and in our own Western States, to avert the "yellow peril" by prohibitive legislation.

In point of fact, the statesmen and economists of Japan contemplate this emigration with no degree of satisfaction. Emigrants settling in non-Japanese countries are not wholly lost to the homeland; yet it is strongly preferred that the outflow should be directed to regions which

are, or are likely some day to be, under the Japanese flag. This includes Formosa and Korea, both capable of absorbing large numbers of artisans and agriculturists. It may also mean Manchuria and other parts of China, and possibly some of the East Indian islands which now belong to other powers.

As was discovered by the United States during the controversy arising out of anti-Japanese agitation in the Pacific coast States, some years ago, Japan is quick to resent any policy on the part of a foreign nation which carries the implication that the Japanese are an inferior people. But, as was also discovered in the adjustment of this controversy, it is a matter of no great difficulty to induce the authorities at Tokyo to restrain Japanese laborers from settling where the home government prefers that they shall not settle. For a long time to come, this fact is likely to save the United States from a troublesome problem.

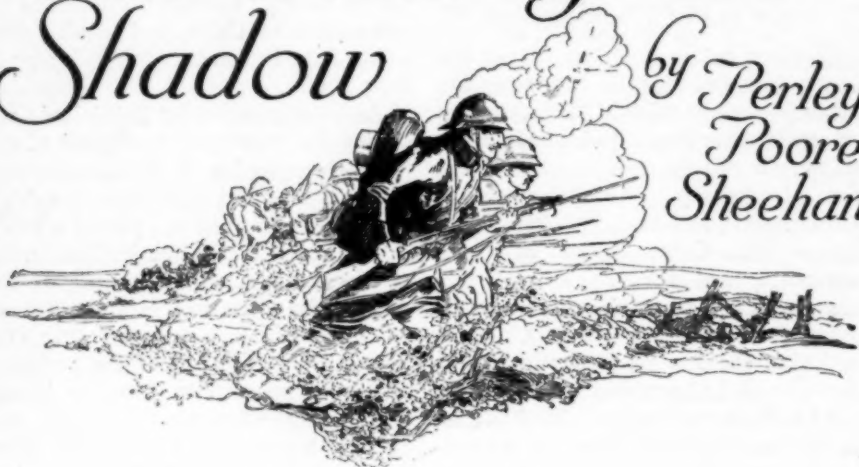
The latest phase of Japanese policy is the decision, in August, 1914, to enter the present war; and the principal pending query relative to Japanese affairs is the effect which the empire's participation in the contest will have upon her status and purposes.

To the present time, the positive services rendered to the cause of the Allies have been the capture of Germany's Oriental stronghold, Kiau-chau, and the despatch to Russia, by way of the Trans-Siberian railway, of large quantities of arms, ammunition, and supplies. Meanwhile, the conflict has brought great industrial and commercial activity to Japan. In particular, the driving of the German flag from the seas, and the withdrawal of the Allies' shipping for war service, have put into her hands almost the whole maritime trade of the Orient.

It is too early to speak of the political results of the great struggle; but all the indications are that the longer it lasts, the more decidedly it will tend to strengthen the position of the Mikado's empire as a world-power.

The Trail of the Shadow

by Perley
Poore
Sheehan



JACQUES NAUDÉ, sixty-five years old, with a permanent crook in his back and a gnarled hand that shook heavily on the knob of his walking-stick, stared and stared at the placard on the white-washed wall of the *mairie*. He was seeing the thing that he had dreaded and expected to see for more than a year, and the sight of it was proving even worse than the black anticipations that had come to him these many nights through which he had lain awake.

Then there had always been some faint glimmer of hope; now the last hope was gone. There was the name of his son-in-law, Jules Duperron, officially posted as a deserter.

Jacques cast one look of misery and desperate envy at the crowd on the other side of the doorway. Almost the whole village was there—what was left of it, children and women and men old like himself; a few boys in uniform, but lacking a leg or an arm; a few other boys also in uniform, bearded, back from the trenches for a day or so on furlough.

Most of the women had tears in their eyes. On every face was an expression of strained interest that amounted almost to

exaltation. But there was no outcry. There was no speech, except for a crooning undertone.

Those people also were looking for familiar names—missing, wounded, dead on the field of honor. They were in a desperate hurry, and yet they took their time. The paste slowly dried, the paper whitened, the pale names came out so clearly that there could be no mistake. And then the crowd began to shift and break away—a woman with an apron over her face running fast; an old couple clinging to each other as if for mutual support, the five small children of the absent notary fluttering away like frightened sparrows.

Some of those who had lingered to the last paused to speak to Jacques Naudé. They knew well enough what it was that held the old leather-worker there; yet their salutations were the same as they always had been.

"*Bonjour, Père Naudé!*"

"*Bonjour, Jacques!*"

Jacques Naudé saluted his friends and neighbors in silence. There was a look of pain in his eyes. He would have spoken, but there was merely a dry clicking in his throat. No words came.

The villagers had become experts in affliction. They recognized his need, and presently he was alone.

Once more Jacques Naudé stared at the name of Jules Duperron, deserter; and into his slow mind, to take the place of the faint hope that had disappeared, there came the first glimmer of a desperate resolution. He was an old soldier. Desertion in times like these carried the death penalty with it, and rightfully so. He himself would see Jules. He would find him. He would urge him to return and throw himself on the mercy of the military authorities.

After all, France needed men. It would be a chance worth taking. But if Jules refused to return?

"I—I will kill him myself!" said Jacques Naudé; and he started toward his home.

II

He lived in a stanch, neat cottage of stuccoed stone, just off the main street. There was a large garden around it, surrounded by a high wall. It might have been the fairest spot on earth for an old workman like Jacques Naudé, had the circumstances been different.

But he had no family. Ten years ago his only daughter, Eugénie, had run away with that same Jules Duperron, worthless and handsome, who was now posted as a renegade. For nine years and six months the old man had not heard from them, but he had never ceased to think about them.

True, Eugénie had written twice in the first six months after her elopement, once from London and once from New York. True, her father had replied, after the manner of the hard-headed old peasant, that he was sorry that Eugénie had dishonored him, that she had chosen her course and would have to follow it.

The nine years and six months had dragged their weary length. It had taken him about that length of time to admit that he had made a mistake. Eugénie was of the same stock, unyielding, hard-headed. Yet he had always looked for-

ward to the time when she would yield. He had always looked on the cottage as Eugénie's future home, rather than his own. He had never planted a vine or a bush or a tree without saying to himself:

"Eugénie is going to like that when she sees it."

Eugénie never would return to the village as the wife of a deserter. He knew her well enough for that!

All that afternoon and far into the night he sat on a bench inside his walled garden and struggled with the situation that confronted him. He did not want to commit murder. And yet, would it be murder?

He was holding court. He was passing judgment. He would merely be going one step farther, carrying out the only sentence the case allowed.

It was that element of self-interest, however, that still made him falter and seek for an alternative. With Jules Duperron out of the way, there would be no obstacle to Eugénie's return. Naudé would kill a man for the good of France, but not for his own. That was what made him hesitate. He was slow of thought, but he was logical.

Early next morning Jacques Naudé appeared at the *mairie*. He was far from having confidence in the alternative he had evolved, but still it was worth trying.

Mayor Carpeaux, five years older than Jacques, one of his hands permanently deformed by rheumatism, albeit he was otherwise as agile and sharp-eyed as a hawk, was already at his desk. He greeted Jacques with brisk cordiality.

Once in the very remote past M. Carpeaux had belonged to the *château* class, and he was inclined to be haughty. But there were no more classes in France. M. Carpeaux put out his good hand, which happened to be his left one, and shook the calloused fingers that the other offered.

"*Monsieur le maire*," said Jacques, "I was wondering if you wouldn't have the goodness to help me to enlist."

M. Carpeaux sat back jerkily.

"But you've already tried it!" he exclaimed.

"I'm an old soldier."

"So am I!" cried the mayor. "And didn't I demand that they should take me? And didn't they refuse? Why should you expect to be favored over the rest of us? I know that you'll say that I'm no good on account of this *sacré* hand of mine; but I can shoot left-handed, *pardi!*"

"This is different," said Jacques Naudé steadily. His troubled, reflective eyes evaded the hawklike glance of the mayor. His voice sank to a shaky whisper: "It's on account of my son-in-law, Jules Duperron. Is it not possible that the authorities would take me instead of him; let me enlist in his name, or at least surrender in his name? They could send me to prison or shoot me. The records could be kept in order, and there would be one deserter less."

Mayor Carpeaux was leaning back in his chair again. His expression was definitely less hawklike.

"Listen, my friend," he said. "What you suggest is very handsome. As an old soldier I can appreciate it. I like to think that I should make such a proposal myself, if it were my son-in-law posted out there instead of yours. But there is only one way in which the records can be purged in this matter."

The mayor paused, and the two old men looked at each other. Jacques Naudé, his lower lip pendulous with suspended interest, stood waiting.

"There is only one way," said the mayor; "and that is to furnish proof that your son-in-law is dead."

"Perhaps he is already dead," said Jacques Naudé. The glimmer of this hope slowly took possession of his mind. "Perhaps he died a long time ago," he went on almost gaily. "He had his faults. He wasn't worth very much, it's true; but he was a joker. Ah, yes! And it would be just like him to be properly dead and still get his name posted as a deserter. Let us hope that he is dead, indeed!"

"We must always hope for the best," said the mayor, shaking hands with Jacques Naudé.

The mayor, too, was relieved; and indeed the feeling was shared pretty much by the whole village. The name of Jules Duperron remained posted on the *mairie* wall. The government could do no otherwise, since official confirmation of his death was lacking; but that he was dead—now that the suggestion was made—no one was willing to doubt.

Those who came to look at the other bulletins now felt free to look at the missing man's name with a melancholy interest that amounted to downright sympathy. They would look at the solitary name posted there and say:

"Without doubt, he is dead."

Never while he was alive had Duperron given such satisfaction to his fellow men.

This general satisfaction was intensified in the heart of Jacques Naudé. Every now and then—as he trimmed the vines and bushes of his garden; as he lay awake at night with the haunted insomnia of old age—there would come to him a sharp recollection of the time when he had resolved to become his son-in-law's executioner. It was a recollection that always brought with it a gust of nightmare. But Jules was dead; and Naudé, he would let himself go in expressions of poignant gratitude.

III

THERE was a little moving-picture show in the village. At first, in the early days of the war, its business had dwindled away almost to extinction. Then it had gone into complete eclipse. Lately, however, it had been revived by a patriotic committee up in Paris. It was a very powerful committee, which was doing the same thing all over the country, having the welfare of stricken villages and convalescent soldiers at heart. Films were being collected from everywhere and freely circulated.

Jacques Naudé had just stepped out of his garden gate one afternoon. He stood there thinking, propped up by a gnarled and heavy hand on the knob of his walking-stick, when a little girl came running up to him.

"Oh, Père Naudé," she cried, "your son-in-law is on the film over at the cinematograph!"

"Are you sure?"

"Everybody says so. Go and see!"

It was true. Jacques knew that it must be true, even before he set his unwilling legs in motion. He had been living in a fool's paradise. He knew Jules!

Jacques was glad that the little hall was dark; but his misery and shame were such that nothing mattered very much. The show was just beginning again, and the very things that stirred the other spectators to enthusiasm were what weighed on him most heavily—the fluttering flag of the republic in three colors, several reels of marching troops, and portraits of favorite generals, including one of Papa Joffre.

Then the main feature of the entertainment flickered upon the screen. It was an old film. The title and printed insertions were in a language that Jacques could not understand—English, so some one said.

"At least," said Jacques in his heart, grasping at some straw of palliation, "it's the language of an ally!"

The reel flickered into its opening scenes. It was a squalid story of crime and poverty in a great city. There were swarming slums, sordid barrooms, a rough but wonderfully efficient police.

Jacques felt his heart stop, and then begin to pound. There in very truth was Jules Duperron—worthless, handsome, unchanged. He was even cast in the rôle he had always played. He was the villain of the piece, cunning, brutal, unscrupulous!

Once more Jacques Naudé appeared at the *mairie*, early in the day, before M. Carpeaux was too busy to be disturbed.

"Well, my friend?" cried the mayor, shaking hands. M. Carpeaux had always had a reputation for being a trifle hard; but he could tell when a man was suffering. Like all the rest of the village, he was aware that the shadow of the deserter had appeared on the film. "Well, what is it now?"

"*Monsieur le maire*," Jacques said, "I've come to get your assistance in se-

curing a passport. I'm going to look for Jules."

"But you don't know where he is!" protested the mayor.

"*Mais oui!* He is in America. *Monsieur le curé* helped me to discover that. The film came from America. I will seek him at the office of the company that made the film."

"And then?"

"I don't know. Perhaps I shall be able to bring him back. Perhaps I can bring only my daughter Eugénie back. No matter! It will be some little act for France—not what our old Papa Joffre is doing, but something."

"I'll help you to get your passport," M. Carpeaux said.

Old soldiers weren't given to asking too many questions.

IV

THERE was a sensation in the village when it was learned that Jacques Naudé was gone. The sensation grew when it became certain that he had gone to seek his recreant son-in-law.

The village had had its fill of sensations of other sorts. There was scarcely a day without one. By word of mouth, by post, by newspapers, by those ever-recurring bulletins on the wall of the *mairie*, the news came back from the battle-front. The children whose birth seemed an event of only yesterday were dying up there like men; but not all of them, for every now and then some boy came home wounded, with a strange, sad, enlightened expression in his face—a boy no longer, eager to be cured of his hurts that he might resume the greatest work in the world.

But the sensation of Jacques Naudé's departure was different. Now that he was gone they could say it openly—the desertion of Jules Duperron had been a stain on the honor of all of them. Jacques Naudé would find a means to wipe it out.

The idea prevailed that he was going to bring his son-in-law back with him. Just how he was going to do it did not matter. Anyway, he was going to have his share in

the work of the war. It was an age of miracles!

That must have been the feeling in the heart of Jacques Naudé himself that night when the ship that had brought him from Bordeaux picked up Fire Island Light and the western breeze brought him his first breath from America.

He was grizzled. He was old. He had passed his life as a country artisan, save for the few momentous years of his service in the army. But as he took off his soft felt hat and lifted his rugged face to the invisible shore he was recalling the last sermon preached by *monsieur le curé*.

Was not France also old? Had she not also suffered and waited long, made her mistakes, repented of them? Was she not also facing an invisible shore of destiny? Why should a son of France falter, or doubt, or be afraid?

The officials at Ellis Island were good to him, especially one of them who spoke French like a Frenchman. They found that he had plenty of money—ten thousand francs—and was not likely to become a public charge. They admitted him, and he disappeared into the Grand Cañon of Broadway.

A week later found Jacques Naudé working at his trade at a little shop on Sixth Avenue. Good leather-work was good leather-work in America just as it was in France, and once more he was taking time to think.

He was spending none of his precious ten thousand francs. He had saved them franc by franc, and they were all for Eugénie. Moreover, he had discovered almost immediately that the finding of Jules wasn't going to be such a simple affair as he had anticipated.

He had taken quarters in a little French boarding-house far down-town. It was a good place. The address had been given him by the French-speaking official at Ellis Island. The landlord had a daughter, and she had been only too willing to accompany Jacques to the offices of the moving-picture concern, to act as interpreter; but there they had had a setback.

Yes, Jules Duperron had worked for the company, but had left it to go to South America. He must have come back, for the young lady at the switchboard had seen him recently; but at this point the young lady had begun to manifest caution.

Where was Jules Duperron now? She didn't know. Where did he live? She didn't know. His wife—was she well? No answer.

Other callers were demanding attention. Old Jacques surveyed the motley throng of actors—old and young, men and women, discouraged and hopeful, representatives of almost every race from black to red.

"That's like Jules," the old Frenchman whispered. "He hides himself, but I will find him!"

Night after night he went about his search. It was the moving-picture houses that had the greatest fascination for him. On three different occasions the shadow of his son-in-law had again mocked him from the screen, pictured there in fresh records of his old, half-forgotten villainies. At the sight of him the stern resolution in Jacques Naudé's heart would burn solid white, like a veritable sword of flame.

It was at night, when he awoke with a start, that he found the flame flickering, sometimes almost altogether extinguished; and he would toss and groan and seek an answer other than the one that had brought him from France.

But, after all, he was an old soldier. So he would reason in the daytime, while working at his bench. Death in any form—be it his own death or that of another—had for him no terrors. Millions of men, far better men than Jules Duperron, had already given up their lives over there in Europe; others, undismayed, were ready to sacrifice theirs to vindicate the sacrifices of those who had gone before.

He would put the thing up to his son-in-law squarely:

"First, you can go back to France and take the consequences. Then you will be sure of honor, and will have at least a

chance to live. Second, you can refuse; but in that case I myself will supply the proof that you are dead!"

He had armed himself to this end. In a leather sheath, which he himself had made, he carried a knife of his trade. It had a strong blade, with the keen edge of a razor, the sharp point of a needle.

V

It was an evening late in April, more than two months after the old man had set out from France on his pilgrimage of retribution. The delay had merely confirmed his purpose. He was no longer undecided, even when he awoke in the night. And the purpose shone in his eyes, almost as if that solid white flame in his breast were a tangible thing, as he took his stick and started out to walk once more through the crowded streets.

He was led on and on by the momentary expectation of seeing either Jules himself or Eugénie just ahead of him. It seemed impossible that he could keep on indefinitely looking into the myriad faces without at last finding at least one of those whom he sought.

Presently he turned into a congested side street, where push-carts lined the curb, where countless children played and squalled and fought over the slimy paving-stones, where both men and women were as if modeled all from the same drab clay.

Then suddenly Jacques Naudé paused. He was shaking all over. He hadn't seen Jules, but there was Eugénie!

She was very poor. Her clothes showed that. There was a hint of age and weariness about her, and yet she had not so greatly changed—not for her father, at any rate. Jacques Naudé was seeing her as he had last seen her in France—the evening before she ran away. Excitement was clamorous inside of him—savage, tender, death-dealing, gay.

He caught his breath. He exerted his will to control the trembling hand that held his stick. He shambled into pursuit.

Eugénie carried a sack with provisions in it. Obviously she was going home. She

walked fast. She turned into the doorway of a poor tenement.

Jacques Naudé followed her, but in the doorway he stopped. He was breathless, but it wasn't lack of breath that held him. He hadn't foreseen the touch of misery that had suddenly made Eugénie so real to him. Manifestly he couldn't add to this misery of hers by killing Jules Duperron in her presence.

He would have to wait. Manifestly Jules was either in or out; and in either case he would have to pass, sooner or later, through the hall. So Jacques composed himself to wait.

It was dark in the hall. The door to the street was open. Jules Duperron was not the sort of man who stays at home after supper.

Old Jacques, excited but firm, took a stand in a dark corner. He loosened his razor-edged, needle-pointed knife, and adjusted it ready to his hand.

It was like sentry duty. Like this, in the old days, he had stood at some lonely outpost. And wasn't he now once more engaged in his country's service? No danger that he would fall asleep! No need that the ghost of Napoleon should stand guard for him, as the Great Emperor had once done for another sentinel!

As the night wore on, and still Jules failed to appear, either to come in or to go out, Jacques was penetrated by a growing unrest. His thoughts kept coming back to Eugénie—what she had looked like back there in the street, what she might be doing now, what she would say when she saw him.

"If the enemy doesn't appear," said Jacques, "it's a soldier's duty to go and look for him!"

He climbed the first flight of stairs. It was a heavy climb. Shortness of breath and his pounding heart made him stop at frequent intervals. Rank kitchen smells and the hubbub of discordant voices; grime and a flickering light—these were the constituents of Eugénie's life in the crowded American city. And all the time there had been that other life, the life of

the little house in the French garden, that he had held ready for her!

He was standing there panting, thinking thoughts like that, when there came to him a few notes of song. It was a song that he himself had sung to Eugénie when she was a baby. The recollection was rendered complete by the clear, piping accents of a child in distress.

Some power greater than even his resolution as an old soldier gripped Jacques Naudé. He stepped swiftly to the door from which the voices had come. He pushed it open.

Eugénie was there. She had a child in her arms. She gave him one startled look; then she and the child and old Naudé were all locked in the one embrace.

"It's little Jacques," Eugénie said while she wept. And then: "So you knew! So you knew!"

"Yes, I knew," said old Jacques, with no idea what his daughter meant.

He still kept up the pretense minutes later, as he held his wondering grandchild on his knee and stared at him. Eugénie had fumbled through a bureau drawer, had found a letter. She had begun to read it to her father, while his old brain was still

whirling and dazed like a shot pigeon. It was a letter from Jules.

"I am at the front," she read. "It's true that I got here a little late, but not too late. The authorities gave me a clean bill when they learned that I had been in Chile, and how hard I had tried to get here at the first call. I am serving in my old regiment. We have just got word that to-night we are to attack the enemy's trenches. It will perhaps be the end. I know that I haven't been worth much in the past, but, as God is my witness, I can at least die in a way worthy of you and the child and the flag—"

Eugénie's voice trailed off.

"When did he leave?" asked Jacques Naudé huskily.

"He sailed for Bordeaux ten weeks ago to-day," Eugénie answered.

"We passed each other on the sea," said Jacques, as he drew Eugénie to his knee and caressed her head on his shoulder with a calloused hand. "I knew it! That was the thing I knew. I knew that Jules would hear the call and might have to leave you here. It wasn't much that I could do, but I came, on his account, to bring you home!"

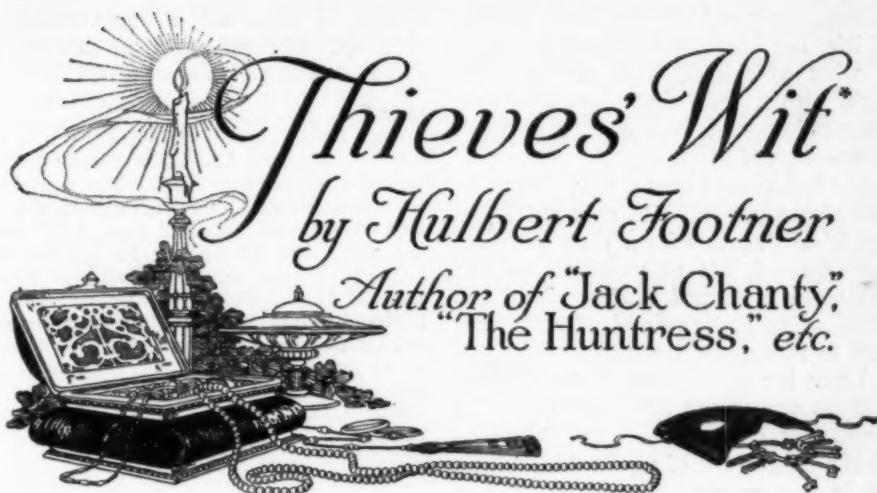
THE LITTLE MOTHERS OF HESTER STREET

THE little mothers of Hester Street
Are singing a lullaby;
Their song is keyed to the voice of toil,
The drone of a huckster's cry;
And far above are the tiny stars
Agleam in the evening sky.

The little mothers of Hester Street
Crouch low on the curb and sing;
They rock and sway on the seat of stone,
The little ones fret and cling;
And far above floats the mother moon—
A wonderful silver thing.

The little mothers of Hester Street
Are singing their lullaby;
The childish voices are thin and shrill,
Their bosoms are flat and dry;
And far away in a land of dreams
The meadows for which they sigh!

Clara Griffith Gazzam



Thieves' Wit

by Hulbert Footner

Author of "Jack Chanty,"
"The Huntress," etc.

MY first case! With what an agreeable thrill a professional man repeats the words to himself! I was well along in the thirties before I got my start, and had lost a deal of hair from my cranium. This enabled me to pass for ten years older when I wished; and at the same time, with a little assistance from my friend Oscar Nilson, the wig-maker, I could still make a presentable figure of youth and innocence.

During my earlier days I had been a clerk in a railway freight-office, a poor slave with only my dreams to keep my heart up. My father had no sympathy with my aspirations to be a detective. He was a close-mouthed and a close-fisted man; but when he died, after having been kept on scanty rations for years, my mother and I found ourselves fairly well off.

I promptly shook the dust of the freight-office from my feet and set about carrying some of the dreams into effect. I rented a little office on Fortieth Street at twenty dollars a month, furnished it discreetly, and had my name painted in neat characters on the frosted glass of the door—"B. Enderby," and no more. Lord, how proud I was of the outfit! I bought a fire-proof document-file for

cases, and had some note-paper and cards printed in the same neat style:

B. ENDERBY

CONFIDENTIAL INVESTIGATOR

You see, I wished to avoid the sensational. I was not looking for any common divorce-evidence business. Since I had enough to exist on, I was determined to wait for important, high-priced, kid-glove cases.

While I waited I studied crime in all its aspects. I worked, too, at another ambition which I shared with a few million of my fellow creatures—to write a successful play. I started a dozen and finished one. I thought it a wonder of brilliancy then. I have since learned better.

It was the play-writing that brought me my first case. I used to haunt the office of a certain prominent play-broker, who was always promising to read my play and never did. One afternoon, in the up-stairs corridor of the building where this broker had her offices, I came face to face with Irma Hamerton.

Nowadays Irma is merely a tradition of loveliness and grace. Theatergoers of this date see nothing like her to rejoice their eyes. Then, to us humble

fellows, she stood for the rarest essence of life, the ideal, the unattainable—call it what you like. Tall, slender, and dark, with a voice that played on your heart-strings, she was one of the fortunate ones of earth.

She had always been a star, always an idol of the public. Not only did I and my friends never miss a show in which she appeared, but we would sit up half the night afterward talking about her. None of us had dreamed of seeing her face to face and close to.

I met her at a corner of the corridor, and we almost ran into each other. I forgot my manners entirely. My eyes almost popped out of my head. I wished to fix that moment in my life forever. Imagine my confusion when I saw that she was crying, that glorious creature! Actually the tears were running down her soft cheeks, like any common woman's. Do you wonder that a kind of convulsion took place inside me?

Seeing me, she quickly turned her head; but it was too late. I had already seen the drops stealing like diamonds down her cheeks. I stared at her like a clown, and like a clown I blurted out, without thinking:

"Oh, what's the matter?"

She didn't answer me, of course. She merely hurried faster down the hall and turned the next corner.

When I realized what I had done, I felt like butting my silly head through one of the glass partitions that lined the corridor. I called myself all the names in my vocabulary. I clean forgot my own errand in the building, and went back to my office muttering to myself in the streets, like a lunatic.

I was glad no one dropped in. In my mind I went over the scene of the meeting a hundred times, I suppose, and made up what I ought to have said and done—still more ridiculous, I expect, than what had happened. What bothered me was that she would think I was just a common fresh guy. I couldn't rest under that; so I started to write her

a note. I wrote half a dozen and tore them up. The one I sent ran like this—I blush to think of it now:

MISS IRMA HAMERTON:

DEAR MADAM: The undersigned met you in the corridor of the Manhattan Theater Building this afternoon about three. You seemed to be in distress, and I was so surprised that I forgot myself and addressed you. I beg that you will accept my apology for the seeming rudeness. I have seen you in all your plays, many of them several times over, and I have received so much pleasure from your acting, and I respect you so highly, that it is very painful to me to think that I may have added to your distress by my rudeness. I assure you that it was only clumsiness, and not intentional rudeness.

Yours respectfully,

B. ENDERBY.

The instant after I had posted this letter I would have given half I possessed to get it back again. It suddenly occurred to me that it would only make matters worse. Either it would seem like an impertinent attempt to pry into her private affairs, or a bold move to follow up my original rudeness. A real gentleman would not have said anything about Miss Hamerton's tears, I told myself. My cheeks grew hot, but it was too late to recall the letter. I was thoroughly miserable. I did not tell any of my friends what had happened.

That night I went alone to see her play. Lost in her part, of course, and hidden under her make-up, she betrayed nothing. There was always a suggestion of sadness about her, even in comedy. When that deep, lovely voice trembled, a corresponding shiver went up and down your spine.

I thought about her all the way home. My detective instinct was aroused. I tried to figure out what could be her trouble.

There are only four kinds of really desperate trouble—ill health, death, loss of money, and unrequited love. To look at her in the daylight, without make-up, was enough to dispose of the first. It was said that she had no close relatives, therefore she couldn't have lost any re-

cently. As for money, surely, with her earning capacity, she had no need to trouble about that.

Finally, how could it be an affair of the heart? Was there a man alive who would not have cast himself at her feet if she had turned a warm glance in his direction? Rich, successful, and adored as she was, I had to give it up.

About five o'clock the next afternoon the surprise of my life was administered to me. I received a large, square, buff-colored envelope with a brown border, addressed to me with brown ink in immense, angular characters. On opening it my hand trembled with a delicious foreboding of what was inside, even though better sense was telling me not to be a fool. It contained a card on which was written:

Miss Irma Hamerton will be glad to see Mr. B. Enderby if it will be convenient for him to call on her at the Hotel Rotterdam at noon on Thursday.

For a moment I stared at the written words, dazed. Then I went up in the air. I did a sort of war-dance around the office. Finally I rushed out to the best shop in the neighborhood to get a new suit before closing-time. Thursday was the next day!

II

I HAD never been inside that most exclusive of exclusive hotels, the Rotterdam. I confess that my knees were a little infirm as I went through the marble entrance and passed before the nonchalant, indifferent eyes of the handsome footmen in blue liveries.

"Ah, they're only overgrown bell-hops!" I told myself encouragingly, and fixed the marquis behind the desk with a haughty stare.

Walking in a dream, I presently found myself being shown into a corner room high up in the building. I was left there alone, and I had a chance to look around. I had never seen anything like it, except on the stage. It was decorated in what I think they call the Empire style, with

walls of white paneled wood, picked out with gold, and pretty, curiously shaped furniture. Everywhere there were great bunches of pink roses, picked that morning, you could see, with petals still moist. It smelled as I thought heaven might.

That was all I had time to take in when the door opened, and *she* entered. She was wearing a pink, lacy sort of thing that went with the roses. She didn't mind me, of course. She was merely polite and casual; but just the same I could see that she was deeply troubled about something. Trouble makes a woman's eyes big, and that makes a beautiful woman twice as beautiful.

She went to the point as straight as a bullet.

"I suppose you are wondering why I sent for you?"

I confessed that I was.

"It was the heading on your letter-paper. What do you mean by 'confidential investigator'—a detective?"

"Something a little better than an ordinary detective, I hope."

She switched to another track.

"Why did you write to me?"

This took me by surprise.

"There was no reason—except what the letter said," I stammered.

Several other questions followed, by which I saw she was trying to get a line on me. I offered her references. She accepted them inattentively.

"It doesn't matter so much what other people think of you," she said. "I have to make up my own mind about you. Tell me more about yourself."

"I'm not much of a hand at the brass instruments," I said. "Please ask me questions."

This seemed to please her. After some further inquiries she said simply:

"I wrote to you because it seemed to me from your letter that you had a good heart. I need that perhaps more than detective skill. I live in a blaze of publicity. I am surrounded by flatterers. The pushing, thick-skinned sort of people force themselves close to me,

and the kind that I like avoid me, I fear. I am not sure whom I can trust. I am afraid—indeed, I feel certain—that if I put my business in the hands of the regular people it would soon become a matter of common knowledge.”

Her simplicity and sadness affected me deeply. I could do nothing but protest my honesty and my devotion.

“I am satisfied,” she said at last. “Are you very busy at present?”

“Tolerably,” I said with a busy air. It would never have done to let her think otherwise.

“I would like you to take my case,” she said with an enchanting note of appeal; “but it would have to be on the condition that you will attend to it yourself. I should have to ask you to agree not to delegate any part of it to even the most trusted of your employees.”

This was easy, since I didn’t have any.

“You must, please, further agree not to take any steps without consulting me in advance; and you must not mind—perhaps I might call the whole thing off at any moment. But of course I would pay you.”

I quickly agreed to the conditions.

“I have been robbed of a pearl necklace,” she said with an air of infinite sadness.

I did not need to be told that there was more in this than the ordinary case of an actress’s stolen jewels. Irma Hamerton didn’t need that kind of advertising. She was morbidly anxious that there should be no advertising in this.

“It was a single strand of sixty-seven black pearls, ranging in size from a currant down to a small pea. They were perfectly matched, and each stone had a curious, bluish cast, which I believe to be quite rare. As jewels go nowadays it was not an exceptionally valuable necklace, but it was worth about twenty-six thousand dollars, and represented my entire savings. I have a passion for pearls. These were exceptionally perfect and beautiful. They were the result of

years of search and selection. Jewelers call them blue pearls. I will show you what they looked like.”

She went into the adjoining room for a moment, returning with a string of dusky, gleaming pearls hanging from her hand. They were lovely things. My unaccustomed eyes could not distinguish the blue in them until she pointed it out. It was like the last gleam of light in the evening sky.

“The lost necklace looked exactly like this,” she said.

“Had you two?” I asked in surprise. She smiled a little.

“These are artificial.”

I suppose I looked like the fool I felt.

“A very natural mistake,” she said.

“Some time ago my jeweler advised me not to wear the real pearls on the stage, so I had this made by Roberts. The resemblance was so perfect that I could scarcely tell the difference myself. It was only by wearing them that I could be sure.”

“By wearing them?” I repeated.

“The warmth of my body caused the real pearls to gleam with a deeper luster.”

“Lucky pearls!” I thought.

“They almost seemed alive,” she went on with a kind of passionate regret. “The artificial pearls show no change, of course; and after a time they have to be renewed.”

I asked for the circumstances of the robbery.

“It was at the theater,” she said. “It occurred on the night of February 14.”

“Six weeks ago!” I exclaimed in dismay. “The trail is cold!”

“I know,” she admitted. “I do not expect a miracle.”

I asked her to go on.

“I had an impulse to wear the genuine pearls that night. I got them out of the safe-deposit vault in the afternoon. When I saw the real and the artificial together I was afraid of making a mistake, so I made a little scratch on the clasp of the real strand. I wear them in the first act. I have to leave them

off in the second act, when I appear in a nurse's uniform, and in the third, when I am supposed to be ill. In the fourth act I wear them again. That night I wore the real pearls in the first act. I am sure of that, because they were glowing wonderfully when I took them off—as if there was a tiny fire in each stone. I put them in the pocket of the nurse's uniform, and carried them on the stage with me during the second act. In the third act I was obliged to leave them in my dressing-room, because in this act I am shown in bed; but I thought they would be safe in the pocket of the dress I took off. The instant I returned to my dressing-room I got them out and put them on, suspecting nothing wrong. It was not until after the final curtain that, upon taking them off, I was struck by their dullness. I looked for my little mark on the clasp. It was not there. I found I had two strings of artificial pearls."

When she finished, I asked her the obvious questions.

"Did you have any special reason for wearing the genuine pearls that night?"

"None, except that I loved them. I loved to handle them. They were so alive! I was afraid they might lose their life if I never wore them."

Somehow I was not fully satisfied with this answer; but for the present I let it go.

"Was any one with you when you got them out of the safe-deposit box?" I asked.

"I was quite alone."

"Did any one know you were wearing them that night?"

"No one."

"Were there any strangers on the stage?"

"No. At my request, my manager is very particular as to that. I have been so much annoyed by well-meaning people that no one is admitted. In this production the working force behind is small. I can give you the name of every person who was on the stage that night."

"Has any one connected with the company left since then?"

"No."

"Who has the entrée to your dressing-room while you are on the stage?"

"Only my maid; but she is not expected to remain there every moment. Indeed, I remember seeing her watching the scene from the first entrance that night."

"During which time your room was unlocked?"

"Very likely; but the door to it was immediately behind her."

"Have you any reason to suspect her?"

"None whatever. She's been with me four years. Still, I do not except her from your investigation."

"Does she know of your loss?"

"No one in the world knows of it but you and I."

"And the thief," I added.

She winced. I was unable to ascribe a reason for it.

"Do you care to tell me why you waited six weeks before deciding to look for the thief?" I asked her as gently as possible.

"My jeweler, who is also an old friend, has secured three more blue pearls," she answered quickly. "He has asked me for the necklace, so that he can add them to it. I cannot put him off much longer without confessing that I have lost it."

"Shouldn't we tell him that it has been stolen?" I asked, surprised.

She energetically shook her head.

"Jewelers have an organization for the recovery of stolen jewels," I persisted.

"The only way we can prevent the thief from realizing on the pearls is by having the loss published throughout the trade in the usual way."

"I can't consent to that," she said with painfully compressed lips. "I want you to make your investigation first."

"Do you mind telling me who is your jeweler?"

"Mr. Alfred Mount."

"If you could only tell me why he must not be told!" I insinuated.

She still shook her head.

"A woman's reason," she said, avoiding my glance.

"You know, of course, how much you increase my difficulties by withholding part of your confidence?"

There was a little tremble in her lovely throat.

"Don't make me sorry I asked you to help me," she said.

I bowed.

"See what you can do in spite of it," she added wistfully.

III

I NEED not take the space to put down all my early reasoning on the case. I had plenty to think about, but every avenue my thoughts followed was blocked sooner or later by a blank wall. Never in my whole experience have I been asked to take up such a blind trail—and this was my first case, remember. Six weeks lost beyond recall! It was discouraging.

I narrowed myself down to two main theories—either the pearls had been stolen by experienced specialists after long and careful plotting, or they had been picked up on impulse by a man or woman dazzled by their beauty. In this latter case the thief would most likely hoard them and gloat over them in secret.

Not the least puzzling factor in the affair was my client herself. It was clear that Miss Hamerton had been passionately attached to her pearls. She always spoke of them in almost a poetic strain; yet there was a personal note of anguish in her grief which even the loss of her treasure was not sufficient to explain.

Strangest of all, she seemed to be more bent on finding out who had taken them than on getting them back again. She had waited six weeks before acting at all, and now she hedged me around with so many conditions that the prospect of success was slight indeed.

I had an intuition which warned me that if I wished to remain friends with

her, I had better be careful whom I accused of the crime. It was a puzzler, whichever way you looked at it. However, an investigator must not allow himself to dwell on the hopelessness of his whole tangle, but must set to work on a thread at a time. Whichever way it turned out, for some time to come I was to have the delight of seeing her frequently.

I was there again the next afternoon. This day, I remember, the room was fragrant with the scent of great bowls of violets. The lovely, dark-haired mistress of the place looked queenly in a dress of purple and silver. As always when there were a number of people around, she was composed in manner; one might say a little haughty.

There was quite a crowd. It included a middle-aged lady, a Mrs. Bleecker, a little overdressed for her age, and envious-looking. She, it transpired, was Miss Hamerton's companion or chaperon. The only other woman was a sister star, a handsome blond woman older than Miss Hamerton, very affectionate and catty. I have forgotten her name.

The men were of various types. Among them I remember the editor of a prominent newspaper, a well-known playwright, and Mr. Roland Quarles. The latter was Miss Hamerton's leading man. He looked quite as handsome and young off the stage as on, but seemed morose.

Miss Hamerton introduced me all around in her casual way, and left me to sink or swim by my own efforts. None of the people put themselves out to be agreeable to me. I could see that each was wondering jealously where I came in. However, since I had a right to be there, I didn't let it trouble me.

This was life, I told myself, and I kept my eyes and ears open. I was not long in discovering that these "brilliant" people chattered about as foolishly as the humblest I knew. Only my beautiful young lady was always dignified and gracious. She let others do the talking.

I stubbornly outstayed them all,

though the men were very reluctant to leave me in possession of the field. As for Mrs. Bleecker, I saw in her eye that she was determined to learn what I had come for. However, Miss Hamerton coolly disposed of her by asking the companion to entertain a newcomer in the next room while she talked over a business matter with me.

These people wearied her a little. She relaxed when they had gone.

"I had you shown right up," she said to me, "because I want my friends to become accustomed to seeing you. I hope you did not mind."

I replied that I was delighted.

"I suppose I ought to account for you in some way," she went on, "or their curiosity will run riot. What would you suggest?"

"Oh, let them suppose that I am a playwright in whose work you are interested."

She accepted the idea. How delightful it was for me to share secrets with her!

My particular purpose in making this call was to urge her again to take the jeweler into her confidence. I pointed out that we could hope to do nothing unless we blocked the thief from disposing of the pearls. At length, very reluctantly, she consented, stipulating, however, that the jeweler must be told that she had just discovered her loss. I explained to her that we should have to look back to make sure that the jewels had not already been offered for sale, but on this point she stood firm.

She gave me a note of introduction to Mr. Alfred Mount. I delivered it the following morning.

At this time Mount's was the very last word in fashion. It was a smallish store, but richly fitted up, on one of the best corners of the avenue, up near the cathedral. Every one of the salesmen had the air of a younger son of the aristocracy. They dealt only in precious stones—none of your common stuff, like gold or silver.

I was shown into a private office at the back—a gem of a private office, exquisite

and simple; and in Mr. Alfred Mount I saw that I had a notable man. One guessed that he would have been a big man in any line. So far I knew him only as one of the city's leading jewelers. By degrees I learned that his interests were wide-spread.

He was a man of about fifty, who looked younger, owing to his flashing dark eyes and his lips, full and crimson as a youth's. In a general way he had a foreign look, though you couldn't exactly place him as a Frenchman, an Italian, or a Spaniard. It was only, I suppose, that he wore his black hair and curly beard a little more luxuriantly than a good American. His manner was of the whole world.

My first involuntary impression was dead against the man. He was too much in character with the strange little orchid that decorated his buttonhole.

Later I decided that this feeling was only my Anglo-Saxon narrowness. True, he kept a guard on his bright eyes, and his red lips were firmly closed; but do we not all have to train our features? He was a jeweler who earned his bread by kotowing to the rich. My own face was not an open book, yet I considered myself a fairly honest fellow.

He read my letter of introduction, which stated that I would explain my business to him. Upon his asking what that was, I told him quietly that Miss Hamerton had been robbed of her pearls.

He started in his chair, and pierced me through and through with those brilliant black eyes.

"Give me the facts!" he snapped.

I did so.

"But you?" he said impatiently. "I don't know you."

I offered him my card, and explained that Miss Hamerton had retained my services.

He was silent for a few moments, chewing his mustache. It was impossible to guess what was going on behind the mask of his features. Suddenly he started to cross-question me like a criminal lawyer.

How long had I been in business? Was I accustomed to handling big cases? Had I any financial standing? What references could I give? And so on, and so on.

My patience finally gave way under it.

"I beg your pardon," I said stiffly. "I recognize the right of only one person to examine me in this way, and that is my client."

He pulled himself together and, I must say, apologized handsomely. Like most big men, he was often surprisingly frank.

"Forgive me," he said winningly. "You are quite right. I am terribly upset by your news. I forgot myself. I confess, too, I am hurt that Miss Hamerton should have acted in this matter without first consulting me. I am a very old friend of hers."

I was glad that she had done so, for something told me that I never should have got the job from him. I did not tell him how she had come to engage me, though he gave me several openings to do so.

"I am not a narrow man," Mr. Mount went on in his best manner, "and I will not hold it against you. Only show me that you are the man for the job, and I will aid you with all my power."

I accepted the olive-branch.

"I spoke too hastily myself," I returned. "I shall be glad to tell you anything you want to know about myself."

We basked in the rays of mutual politeness for a while. Still, that instinctive dislike of the man would not quite down. He asked no more personal questions.

"Have the police been notified?" he inquired.

"Miss Hamerton imposes absolute secrecy," I replied.

"Quite so," he said quickly. "That is wise."

I had my doubts of it, but I didn't air them.

"Have you any clues?" he asked.

"None as yet."

"What do you want me to do?"

"To publish the loss through the channels of the trade, with the request that if

any attempt is made to dispose of the pearls we should instantly be notified. The owner's name and the circumstances of the robbery must be kept secret."

"Very good," he said, making a memorandum on a pad. "I will attend to it at once, and discreetly. Is there anything else I can do?"

"I hoped that with your knowledge of jewels and the jewel market you could give me something to work on," I said.

"All I know is at your command," said he.

He talked at length about jewels and jewel-thieves, but it was all in generalities. There was nothing that I could get my teeth into. He gave it as his opinion that the pearls were already on their way abroad, perhaps to India.

"Then you think that the robbery was engineered by experts?"

He spread out his expressive hands.

"How can I tell?"

We parted with mutual expressions of good-will.

"I expect I shall have to come often to you for help," I said at leaving.

"I shall expect you to," he replied earnestly. "I want you to. I and my establishment are at your service. Let no question of expense hamper you."

I found, later, that he really meant this; but I was reluctant to draw on him, nevertheless.

When I saw Miss Hamerton the next day I asked her a question or two concerning Mr. Alfred Mount, wishing to find out if he was really such an old friend as he made out.

"I have always known him," she said simply. "That I happen to buy things from him is merely incidental. He was a friend of my father's, and he is a very good friend to me. He has proved it more than once."

"Then why were you so reluctant to take him into your confidence?" I was tempted to ask; but I reflected that since she had already refused to tell me, I had better keep my mouth shut and find out otherwise.

"Mr. Mount asked if we had notified the police," I said, merely to see how she would take it.

I regretted it. Her expression of pain and terror went to my heart. She was no longer the remote and lovely goddess, but only a suffering woman.

"Oh, you did not, you have not—" she stammered.

"Certainly not," I said quickly. "You told me you didn't wish it."

She turned away to recover herself. What was I to make of it? One would almost have said that she was a party to the theft of her own jewels; and yet, only a few minutes later, she was begging me to discover the thief.

"It tortures me!" she cried. "The suspense, the uncertainty! This atmosphere of doubt and suspicion is suffocating. I wish I never had had any pearls! I wish I were a farmer's daughter or a mill-girl! Please, *please* settle it one way or the other. I shall never have a quiet sleep until I *know*!"

"Know what?" I asked quietly.

But she made believe not to have heard my question.

IV

I SPENT the next two or three days in quiet work here and there. The most considerable advance I made was in picking an acquaintance with McArdle, the property-man of Miss Hamerton's company. Watching the stage door, I discovered that the working force behind the scenes frequented the back room of a saloon on Sixth Avenue for lunch after the show. The rest was easy. By the third night McArdle and I were on quite a confidential footing.

From him I heard any amount of gossip. McArdle was of the garrulous, emotional type, and very free with his opinions. The star was the only one he spared. From his talk I soon got the principal members of the company fixed in my mind.

Besides Mr. Quarles there were George Casanova, the heavy man—a well-known

actor, but, according to McArdle, a loud-mouthed, empty braggart—and Richard Richards, the character heavy, whom the property-man described as a silly old fool devoured by vanity. Among the women the next in importance after the star was Miss Beulah Maddox, the heavy lady, who, in the opinion of my amiable informant, giggled and ogled like a sewing-machine girl, and she forty if she was a day.

Discreet questioning satisfied me that McArdle was unaware that a robbery had been committed in the theater. If he didn't know it, certainly it was not known.

Out of bushels of gossip I sifted now and then a grain of valuable information. He informed me that Roland Quarles was in love with the star. For some reason that I could not fathom he was especially bitter against the young leading man. He would rail against him by the hour, but there seemed to be no solid basis for his dislike.

"Does she favor him?" I asked.

"Nah!" he said. "She's got too much sense. He's a four-flusher, a counter-jumper, a hall-room boy! From the airs he gives himself you'd think he had a million a year. He's a tail-ender with her, and he knows it. He's sore!"

"Who seems to be ahead of him?" I asked with strong curiosity.

"There's a dozen regulars," said McArdle. "Two Pittsburgh millionaires, a newspaper editor, a playwright, and so on. But if you ask me, the jeweler is ahead in the running."

"The jeweler?" I said, pricking up my ears.

"Spanish-looking gent with whiskers," said McArdle. "Keeps a swell joint on the avenue. Mount, his name is. He's a wise guy; does the old family-friend act, see? He's a liberal feller. I hope he gets her!"

This bit of information gave me food for thought. I felt that perhaps it explained my intuitive dislike of Mount. The thought of that old fellow presuming

to court the exquisite Irma made me hot under the collar.

The next morning I called at the store of Roberts, the manufacturer of artificial pearls. This place was as well known in its way as Mount's, since Roberts had sued the Duke of Downshire, and the public had learned that the pearls which his grace had presented to Miss Van Alstine, on the occasion of their marriage, were phony. It was quite a fancy establishment, but, like its wares, on a much less expensive scale than Mount's.

I fell in with a sociable and talkative young salesman who, at my request, showed me a whole trayful of pearl necklaces. Among them I spotted another replica of Miss Hamerton's beautiful string.

"What's this?" I asked carelessly.

"Blue pearls," he rattled off.

"Latest smart novelty—a great hit. Mrs. Minturn Vesey had one sent up only yesterday. She wore it to the opera last night."

"There isn't such a thing really as a blue pearl, is there?" I asked idly.

"Certainly! These are copies of genuine stones, like all our stock. Some time ago a customer sent in the real necklace to have it copied, like they all do. This was such a novelty that Mr. Roberts had a pattern made and put them on sale. It's a winner!"

"I wouldn't want a thing everybody had bought," I said.

"I don't mean that everybody has," he said; "but just a few of the very smartest. It's too expensive for everybody—seven hundred and fifty. The original is priceless."

"How many have you sold?"

"About ten."

"Who else bought them?"

He reeled off a string of fashionable names.

"That's only six."

"The others were sold over the counter."

The affable youngster was a little agrieved when I left without buying.

Mr. Mount was both surprised and deeply chagrined when I told him that exact replicas of Miss Hamerton's pearls were to be had at Roberts's by anybody with the price. He didn't see how he could stop it, either. It appeared that there was a standing feud between Roberts and the fashionable jewelers, in which Roberts had somewhat the advantage, because the regular trade was obliged to employ him. No one else could make such artificial pearls.

With Mr. Mount's assistance I had the sales of the replicas quietly traced. Nothing resulted from this, however. All but two of the necklaces had gone to persons above suspicion. These two had been sold over the counter, one to a man, one to a woman, and as the transactions were more than two months old I could not get a working description of the buyers.

On another morning I went into Dunsany's, the largest and best-known jewelry-store in America, if not in the world, and asked to see some one who could give me some information about pearls. I was steered up to a large, pale gentleman wearing glasses, very well dressed, of course. I heard him addressed as Mr. Frear. I put on my most youthful and engaging manner.

"Look here," I said, "I expect you'll want to have me thrown out for bothering you, but I'm in a hole."

My smile disarmed him.

"What can I do for you?" he asked politely.

"I'm a fiction-writer," I said. "I'm writing a story about blue pearls, and somebody told me there was no such thing. Was he right?"

"Sometimes the black pearl has a bluish light in it," said Mr. Frear; "but it would take an expert to distinguish it. Such pearls are called blue pearls in the trade."

"I suppose you haven't got one you could show me?" I said.

He shook his head.

"They rarely come into the market."

There is probably only one place in New York where they can be found."

"And that is?"

"Mount's. Mr. Alfred Mount has a hobby for collecting them. Naturally, when a blue pearl appears, it is generally offered first to him. You'd better go to see him. He knows more about blue pearls than any other man in the world."

"One more question," I said, fearing lest I might wear out my welcome. "In my story I have to imagine the existence of a necklace of sixty-seven blue pearls ranging in size from a currant down to a small pea, all perfectly matched, perfect in form and luster. If there was such a thing, what would it be worth?"

When I described the necklace I received a mild shock, for Mr. Frear was visibly affected by some sudden emotion. Whether it was surprise, or consternation, or something else, I could not decide. The muscles of his large, pale face never moved, but I saw his eyes contract in a curious way. He smiled stiffly.

"I couldn't say," he said. "Its value would be very large—almost fabulous."

"Please give me some idea," I said, "just for the sake of the story."

He moistened his lips.

"Oh, say half a million dollars. That would not be too much."

I swallowed my astonishment, thanked him, and made my way out.

Here was more food for cogitation!

Why should a few idle questions throw the pearl expert at Dunsany's into such visible agitation? I had to give it up. Perhaps it was only a twinge of indigestion, or a troublesome corn. Anyhow I lost sight of it in the greater discovery. Half a million dollars for the necklace, and Miss Hamerton had told me that buying it pearl by pearl it had cost her about twenty-six thousand!

V

MEANWHILE there was an idea going through my head that I had not quite nerve enough to disclose to my client. It must be remembered that though I was

making strides, I was still green at my business. I was not nearly so sure of myself as my manner might have led you to suppose.

To my great joy, Miss Hamerton herself broached the subject. One afternoon she said, apropos of nothing that had gone before:

"I'm sorry now that I introduced you to my friends; and yet I do not see how I could have seen you without their knowing it."

"Why sorry?" I asked.

She went on with charming diffidence—how was one to resist her when she pleaded with such a modest and winning air?

"I have thought—if it would not tie you down too closely—that you might take a minor rôle in my company."

My heart leaped, but of course I was not going to betray my eagerness if I could help it.

"As to your friends having seen me," I said, "that doesn't make any difference. Disguise is part of my business."

"Then will you?" she eagerly asked.

I made believe to consider her suggestion doubtfully.

"It *would* tie me down," I said.

"Oh, I hope you can arrange it," she insisted.

"Could it be managed without exciting comment in the company?"

"Easily. I have thought it all out. I have an assistant stage-manager, who plays a small part. By increasing his duties behind, I can in a perfectly natural way make it necessary to engage somebody to play his bit. I shall not appear in the matter."

"I have had no experience," I objected.

"I will coach you."

"It would be better to put in an operative."

"Oh, no! No one but you!"

"Well, I'll manage it somehow," I said.

She sighed with relief, and started that moment to coach me.

"You are a thug, a desperate character. You appear in only one scene, a cellar dimly lighted, so you will not be conspicuous from in front. You must practise speaking in a throaty, husky growl."

In order to prolong the delightful lessons, I pretended to be a little more stupid than I was. I was engaged the next day but one through a well-known theatrical agency, where Miss Hamerton had instructed me to apply for a job. Just how she contrived it I can't say, but I know I came into the company without anybody suspecting that it was upon the star's recommendation. In the theater, of course, she ignored me.

Two nights later I made my debut. Mine was such a very small part that no one in the company paid any attention to me, but for me it was a big occasion, I can tell you. In the way of business I have several times faced death with a quieter heart than I had upon first marching out into view of that thousand-headed creature across the footlights.

With the usual egotism of the amateur I was sure they were all waiting to gey me; but they didn't, and I spoke my half-dozen lines without disaster. I felt as if the real me was sitting up in the flies watching his body act down below. Indeed, I could write several chapters upon my sensations that night; but as somebody else has said, that is another story.

What is more important is the discovery of my first piece of evidence.

At the end of the performance I was crossing the quiet stage, on my way out of the theater, when I saw a group of stage-hands and some of the minor members of the company by the stage door, with their heads together over a piece of paper. I joined the group, taking care not to bring myself forward. Another happened along, and he put the question that I wanted to ask:

"What's the matter?"

"McArdle here found a piece of paper on the stage with funny writing on it,"

said Richards. "It's some sort of a mystery."

"Let's have a squint at it," said the newcomer.

I looked over his shoulder. It was a single sheet of cheap note-paper of the style they call "dimity." It had evidently been torn from a pad. It seemed to be the last of several sheets of a letter, and it was written in a cipher which made my mouth water. I have a passion for puzzles of this kind.

I give the cryptogram as I first saw it:

&FQZZDRR CV REW RIPN PFRBQ AT
HXV DGGZT EP FOBQ IVTCVMXK SJQ
TZXD EA UTI ZK.

S CEDBBWYB SWOCNA VMD Y&F GC
AVSNY NCA &MW&M&L. HZF EDM HYW
ZUM IKQ BSCOAIIQVV ZXK FJOP WOD.
KWV DWVXJ. LEE FVTHV G&HJT LSZ-
AND EBCC BFKY NCAFP VEDFET. BSQ
ZWVXJ YXM II PL GC DCR FFBV
EA&BO ULS RLZQ WB NELJ KZNEDLK-
DUA. CSQVE VDEV FBACP! S'WX OS
QQT B EHHZXV. J.

On beholding this apparently meaningless assortment of letters, I had no proof that it had anything to do with my case, but I had a hunch. The question was how to get possession of it without showing my hand. I kept silent for a while, and let the others talk.

Naturally, as the finder of the paper, my excitable friend McArdle—who did not know me, of course, in my present character—took a leading part in the discussion. The principals of the company had not yet emerged from their dressing-rooms. My opportunity came when McArdle stated in his positive way that it was a code, and that it was not possible to translate it without having the code-book.

"A code is generally regular words," I suggested mildly, as became the newest and humblest member of the company. "Nobody would ever think up these crazy combinations of letters. I should say it was a cryptogram."

McArdle wouldn't acknowledge that he didn't know what a cryptogram was, but somebody else asked.

"Substituting one letter for another according to a numerical key," I said. "Easy enough to translate it, if you can hit on the key."

One thing led to another, and soon came the inevitable challenge.

"Bet you a dollar you can't read it!" cried McArdle.

I hung back until the whole crowd joined him in taunting me.

"Put up or shut up!" cried McArdle.

The upshot was that we each deposited a dollar with old Tom, the doorkeeper, and I took the paper home.

It was one of the most ingenious and difficult cryptograms I had ever tackled, and the sun was up before I got it. Here is a transcription:

disposed of and your share of the money is here whenever you want to get it.

I strongly advise you not to leave the company. You say she has not discovered her loss. All right. But these phony pearls soon lose their luster. She might get on to it the same night you hand in your resignation. Then good night! I'll be back Monday. J.*

My hunch was more than justified by the result. This was a richer prize than I had hoped for.

VI

IN my experience I have found that in adopting a disguise it is no less important to change one's character than one's personal appearance. As the new member of Miss Hamerton's company I called myself William Faxon. I appeared as a shabby-genteel little fellow, with lanky hair, and glasses. The glasses were

removed only when I went on the stage in the dark scene. Over my bald spot I wore a kind of transformation that my friend Oscar Nilson furnished. It combed into my own hair, was sprinkled with gray, and made me look like a man on the shady side of forty somewhat in need of a barber.

The character I assumed was that of a gentle, friendly sort of nonentity who agreed with everybody. The people of the company mostly despised me, and made me a receptacle for their egotistical outpourings. They little guessed how they bored me.

When I joined the company it had been agreed between Miss Hamerton and myself that thereafter she had better come to my office on Fortieth Street to hear my reports. It was her custom to call nearly every afternoon about five o'clock. She insisted on hearing every detail of my activities, and listened to the story from day to day with the same anxious interest.

Since she had first broken out in my presence it seemed as if she did not mind letting me see her feelings. Indeed, I guessed that it was a relief to this high-strung woman, who was so much in the lime-light, to let herself go a little. Her implied confidence was very grateful to me. She never gave me the key to her anxiety in so many words, but by this time I was beginning to guess the explanation, as I suppose you are too.

When I had deciphered the cryptogram, I went to bed in high satisfaction. I knew now that I was on the right track.

*For the benefit of those of curious minds, I will give the key to the cryptogram. The simplest form of this kind of puzzle is that in which every letter has a certain other letter to stand for it. It may be the one before it, the one after it, or a purely arbitrary substitution. In any case the same letter always has the same *alias*. That is child's play to solve.

I soon discovered that I was faced by something more complex. Observe that in one place "night" appears as "EA&BO," whereas in the next line it is "FBACP." "Company" masquerades in this extraordinary form—"&MW&M&L." Here was a jaw-breaker!

To make a long story short, I discovered, after hundreds of experiments, that the first letter of the first word of each sentence was ten letters in advance of the one set down; the second letter eleven letters ahead, and so on up to twenty-five, then begin over from ten. With each sentence, however short, the writer began afresh from ten. He added to the complications by including the character "&" as the twenty-seventh letter of the alphabet.

The fragmentary sentence at the top of the page held me up for a long time until I discovered that the first letter was twenty-three numbers in advance of the right one. Several mistakes on the part of the writer added to my difficulties.

The man, or woman, of whom I was in search was in Miss Hamerton's company!

I slept until afternoon. Miss Hamerton had not expected to call that day, so I rang her up to tell her that I had news. She said she couldn't come, but the coast was clear, and could I come to her?

I found her pale and distraught.

"Not bad news?" she asked apprehensively. "I'm not equal to it!"

"How do I know what you would consider bad or good?" I objected; but she ignored my question.

When I explained the circumstances of the finding of the cryptogram, and showed her my translation, I received another surprise. A sigh escaped her; an expression of beatific relief and gladness came into her face. The roses returned to her cheeks. She jumped up.

"You're a welcome messenger!" she cried. "Oh, I'm happy now! I won't worry any more! I *know*!"

I did not understand her at all, and I suppose I looked blank, for she laughed at me.

"Don't mind me," she said. "You're on the right track. You'll soon know everything!"

She moved around the room, humming to herself like a happy girl. She buried her face in a bowl of roses, and caressed them tenderly.

"If I knew who had sent them," I thought, "perhaps it would give me a clue."

"Stay and have dinner with me here, Mr. Enderby," she said suddenly, to my surprise. "I was going to a party, but I will send regrets. I don't want to be with any of them. I'm so happy! I should either have to hide it, or to explain it. I want to be myself for a while."

I did not require much persuasion. It was like dining in fairy-land! I shall never forget that hour as long as I live. We were alone, for the unpleasant Mrs. Bleecker, thinking that Miss Hamerton was dining out, had gone off to some

friends of hers. By tacit consent we avoided any reference to the case.

I went home to disguise myself, and then proceeded to the theater. I had already photographed the cryptogram, and put the negative in my safe. McCordle was lying in wait for me, and I allowed him to drag it out of me that I had not been able to solve the puzzle. He collected the stakes in high glee.

The paper was passed from hand to hand until it literally fell to pieces. No one could make anything out of it, of course. I encouraged the others' talk, helped to circulate the cryptogram, and watched from behind my innocent pieces of window-glass for some one to betray himself; but I saw nothing. The conviction was forced on me that I had a mighty clever antagonist to deal with.

During my long waits I loitered from dressing-room to dressing-room, and let the members of the company talk. As opportunities presented themselves I quietly searched for the first page of the letter, though I supposed it had been destroyed.

The field of my explorations comprised, in all, eighteen actors and actresses and a working force of six. However, the fact that punctuation played a part in the cryptogram, not to speak of the choice of words, convinced me that both the writer and the reader of it must be persons of a certain education, so I eliminated the illiterates.

This reduced me at one stroke to five men and four women. Of these, two of the men were obviously too silly and vain to have carried out such a nervy piece of work, while one of the women was a dear old lady who had been on the stage for half a century, and the other was a mere bit of dandelion-fluff. These exclusions left me with five—Roland Quarles, George Casanova, Kenton Milbourne, Beulah Maddox, and Mary Gray.

Roland Quarles I have already mentioned. Both he and Casanova were actors of established reputation, who had

been in receipt of handsome salaries for some seasons. I scarcely considered them.

Milbourne was my dark horse. He was a hatchet-faced individual, homely, uninteresting, unhealthy-looking. His fancy name sat on him strangely. He looked more like a John Doe or a Joe Williams.

Miss Maddox was a large woman of the gushing-hysterical type; Miss Gray a quiet, well-bred girl who kept to herself a great deal.

While I concentrated on these five, I did not overlook the doings of the others. With all the men I was soon on excellent terms, but the women baffled me. Women naturally despise a man of the kind I pretended to be. You can't win a woman's confidence without making love to her, and that was out of my line.

On Thursday night of the week after I joined, Miss Beauchamp, who played a maid's part, spoiled a scene of Miss Hamerton's by missing her cue. It was not the first offense, and she was fired on the spot. This girl was the bit of fluff I have mentioned.

Her departure suggested an idea to me. There was no time to be lost, so I went to Miss Hamerton at once. In my humble, shabby character I meekly bespoke the part for a "friend."

Miss Hamerton was startled. She said she would consider the application.

I had no sooner got home that night than she called me up to ask what I had meant. I did not want to argue with her over the telephone, so I asked her to see me next morning. She said she would come to my office as soon as she had breakfasted.

Using all my powers of persuasion, it took me more than an hour to win her consent to my putting a woman operative in the vacant part. Not only did I have to have a woman in the company, I told her, but I needed an assistant outside. Not by working twenty-four hours a day could I track down all the clues that opened up. She would never have given

in, I believe, had it not been for the mysterious comfort she had found in the cryptogram.

The rehearsal was called for three o'clock, and I had barely time to get hold of my girl. This brings me to Sadie Farrell, a very important character in my story.

I had been "keeping company" with Sadie for a little while. At least, I considered that I had been doing so, though she denied it. She scorned me. That was her way.

She had always lived at home. Her father and mother were dead, and she lived with her sister. Like almost all home girls, she was crazy to see a bit of life. Her heart was set on being a high-class detective. That was the only hold I had over her. I had promised her that the first time I had occasion to engage a woman operative I would give her a chance.

Moreover, she was full of curiosity concerning Miss Hamerton, whose praises I was always singing. Sadie was never jealous, though. She had a wise little head, and she knew the difference between the feeling I had for that wonderful woman and my regard for her attractive self.

Sadie was at home when I got there.

"What, *you?*" she said, pretending to be bored to death. "I thought I was going to have a peaceful afternoon."

I couldn't resist teasing her a little.

"Cheer up," I said. "I'm going right away again. I thought maybe you'd like to come out with me."

"On a week-day!" she said scornfully. "Run along with you, man! I've got something better to do."

"I bet I can make you come," I said. She tossed her head.

"You know very well you can't *make* me do anything."

"I bet you a dollar I can make you come."

She smelled a mouse.

"What are you getting at?" she demanded.

"I wanted to take you to the theater."

"It's too late for a *matinée*."

"How about a rehearsal?"

Her eyes sparkled.

"A rehearsal! Wouldn't that be wonderful? Oh, you're only fooling me!"

"Not at all," I said. "Miss Hamerton herself invited you."

"Miss Hamerton! Shall I see her?"

"Sure. And what's more, you are the person to be rehearsed."

She simply stared at me.

"She offers you a small part in her company," I drawled.

"*Me!*" said the amazed Sadie. "Why, how—how did it happen?"

"I happen to need an operative in the company, and I got her to take you."

"When is it?" she gasped.

"Three o'clock," I said.

It was twenty minutes to three. Sadie rushed to me and gave my arms a little squeeze.

"Oh, Ben, you darling fool!" she cried, and ran for her hat before I could follow up my advantage.

On the way down-town I coached her as to what she must do. She mustn't let it be suspected that she had never acted before. She must tell the stage-manager that she had been sent by Mrs. Mendoza, the agent. She must ask forty dollars a week and come down to thirty. She must complain that her part was much inferior to those she had been playing. After the rehearsal she was to come to my office, where Miss Hamerton would meet us and give her a lesson in making up.

Sadie simply nodded her wise little head like a bird, and said nothing. Only at the prospect of receiving instruction from the wonderful Irma Hamerton herself did her eyes gleam again. I didn't have time, just then, to tell her what she had to know about the case. I let her get out at the station nearest the theater, while I went on to my office. It was safer, of course, for me not to appear at the rehearsal as the new maid's sponsor.

I had no doubt of Sadie's acquitting

herself creditably. If I had had, no matter what my personal feelings were, I would not have employed her in this case. She was as wise as she was pretty. Under those scornful airs she was as true as steel, and she had the rare faculty of keeping a close tongue in her head.

She had a sort of Frenchy look, with long, narrow eyes and pointed chin. This just happened to suit the part of the maid in the play. If I had looked a month I could not have found a better girl, not to speak of the pleasure I anticipated in working side by side with Sadie Farrell. Moreover, I was hoping by my conduct of the case to force her to admit that I was not quite such a bonehead as she liked to make out.

Everything went off as planned. Sadie, I heard, made a good impression at rehearsal, and at a nod from the star the stage-manager engaged her. Miss Hamerton told me afterward that Sadie went through the rehearsal like an old stager.

They arrived at my office separately, and the lesson in making up was given. Miss Hamerton laid herself out to be kind to Sadie. I think she scented a romance. Anyhow, inside of five minutes Sadie was hers, body and soul. Like myself, the girl would have stopped at nothing to serve her.

After that I told Sadie all the facts in the case. In her woman's way of reasoning she arrived at the same conclusion that I had reached.

"It's the work of a clever gang," she said. "They have evidently put a member, or perhaps more than one, into the company."

"But what a lot of trouble to take," I objected, "since the necklace was not known to be of any great value!"

"Somebody knew!"

"If they knew about blue pearls, they must also have known that Mount was the only buyer."

"Perhaps they were shipped to India," she said. "I suspect that East Indians

have forgotten more about pearls than Mr. Mount ever knew."

The very first time she appeared on the stage Sadie justified my confidence in her powers. Notwithstanding the excitement of making her debut, she managed to keep her wits about her. Women are wonderful that way.

During her only scene on the stage she had to wait at one side for a few minutes. While she stood there, close to the canvas scene, she heard a bit of a conversation on the other side of it. Unfortunately she had not been in the company long enough to recognize the voices.

"Yes, sir, forty thousand dollars," a man said.

"Go away!" was the reply. "How do you know?"

"I saw it entered in his bank-book. I was in his dressing-room, and I saw it on the table. When he went out I looked in it out of curiosity. He deposited forty thousand dollars last week."

"Where do you suppose he got it?"

"Search me!"

"Some fellows have all the luck, don't they?"

Then the voices passed out of hearing.

VII

I HAVE not mentioned Mr. Alfred Mount lately, though I saw him frequently on matters connected with the case. He was an interesting character. It was only by degrees that I realized what an extraordinary man I had to deal with.

After our first meeting his manner toward me completely changed. He appeared to be sorry for his brusqueness on that occasion. Now he was all frankness and friendliness—nothing crude, you understand, but just the air of one man of the world toward another. I could not but feel flattered by it.

While we worked together so amicably, however, our mutual antagonism remained. I knew that he still resented

Miss Hamerton's having employed me without consulting him, and I believed that he was working independently. For my part, you may be sure, I told him nothing but what I had to. I found no little pleasure in blocking his subtle questioning by my air of clumsy innocence. I told him nothing about the cryptogram.

I never visited his office again. Sometimes he dropped into mine, his bright eyes wandering all around, but more often I called on him at his apartment over the store. He occupied the second floor of the beautiful little building which housed his business.

There was nothing of the old-fashioned shopkeeper about his place. Indeed, I never saw such splendor before or since; but it took some time to realize that it was splendor, for there was nothing showy or garish there. Everything he possessed seemed to be the choicest of its kind in the world. Even with my limited knowledge, when I stopped to figure up the value of what I saw, I was staggered. I saw enough at different times to furnish several millionaires.

Mount had a strange love for his treasures, in which there was nothing of the usual self-glorification of millionaires. He had a modest, almost a tender way of referring to his things, and of handling them. From his talk I learned quite a lot about tapestries, rugs, Chinese porcelains, enamels, ivories, and gold workmanship. He did not care for paintings.

"Too insistent!" he said. "Paintings will not merge."

The man was full of queer sayings, which he would draw out with an eye to the effect he was creating on you. He never allowed daylight to penetrate to his principal room—a great hall two stories high, lined with almost priceless tapestries.

"Daylight is rude and unmanageable," he said. "Artificial light I can order to suit my mood."

Another odd thing was his antipathy

to red. That color almost never appeared in his treasures. In the tapestries, greens predominated; the rugs were mostly old blues and yellows.

The great room never looked quite the same. Sometimes it was completely metamorphosed overnight. I understood, from something he let fall, that the other floors of the building were stored with his treasures, which he had brought down from time to time and arranged according to his fancy.

The only servant that I ever saw was a silent Hindu, who sometimes appeared in gorgeous Oriental costume, incrustated with jewels. It occurred to me that that was how his master ought to dress. The sober clothes of a business man, however elegant, were out of place on Mount. Long afterward I learned that it was his custom, when alone, to array himself like an Eastern potentate, but I never saw him dressed that way.

One day, to see what he would say, I asked him pointblank what was the value of Miss Hamerton's lost pearls. He consulted a note-book.

"She paid me at different times exactly twenty-five thousand seven hundred dollars for them."

"I know," I said quietly. "But what was their value?"

He bored me through and through with his jetty eyes before answering. Finally he smiled—he had a charming smile when he chose—and spread out his hands in token of surrender. His hands were too white and beautiful for a man's.

"I see you know the truth!" he said. "Well, I am in your hands. I hope you will keep the secret. Nothing but unhappiness could result from its becoming known."

"I shall not tell," I said. "But how much are they worth?"

"I really couldn't say," he said frankly. "There is nothing like them in the world—nothing to measure them by, I mean. It would depend simply on how far the purchaser could go."

"Wouldn't they be difficult to dispose of, when stolen?"

"Very. That is our hope in the present situation."

"Do you suppose the thief knew what he was getting?"

"I doubt it. To distinguish the blue cast is a fad of my own. They are ordinarily classed simply as black pearls."

Later he returned to the subject of his own accord.

"Since you have learned or guessed so much, I should tell you the whole story, for fear you might have a doubt of Miss Hamerton."

"No danger of that!" I said quickly.

He looked at me strangely. I suppose he was wondering if I presumed to rival him there.

"She, of course, has no suspicion of the true value of the pearls," he went on smoothly. "Nor does she guess that they were in my possession for years. I let her have them one or two at a time. Do you blame me?" He spread out his expressive hands again. "They are the most beautiful pearls in all the world," he murmured softly; "the fruit of all my knowledge and my patience. Pearls in a case are not pearls. Only when they lie on the warm bosom of a woman are pearls really pearls. I wished to have the pleasure of seeing Irma—Miss Hamerton—wearing them. I could not give them to her; so I devised this innocent deception. Wouldn't you have done the same?"

Perhaps I would. Anyhow, I didn't feel called upon to argue the matter with him, so I kept my mouth shut. His long eyes narrowed.

"If you had seen her wear the real pearls, you would understand better," he continued dreamily. "They glowed as if with pleasure in their situation. Her skin is so tender that the veins give it a delicate bluish cast exactly matched by my exquisite pearls."

To me there was something—what would you say?—something delicately indecent in the way Mount spoke of Miss

Hamerton. It made me indignant deep down; but I said nothing.

"I am a fool about precious stones," he went on, with that disarming smile. "No shopkeeper has any right to indulge in a personal passion for his wares. Pearls come first with me, then diamonds. Would you like to see my diamonds?"

Without waiting for any answer, he disappeared into the next room. I heard the ring of a burglar-proof lock. Presently he returned bearing a little black velvet cushion, on which lay a necklet of gleaming fire.

"I am no miser," he said, smiling. "Quantity does not appeal to me, nor mere bigness—only quality. This is my collection—seventy-two stones, the result of thirty years' search for perfection."

I gazed at the fiery spots speechlessly. Before taking this case I had never thought much of precious stones. They had seemed like pretty things to me, and useless; but upon looking at these I could understand Miss Hamerton's reference to her pearls as living things.

These diamonds were alive—devilishly alive. They twinkled up at Mount like complaisant little slaves outvying one another to flatter their master. The sheer beauty of them caught at one's breast. Their fire bit into a man's soul. Seeing it, I could understand the ancient lusts to rob and murder for bits of stone like these.

"Aren't they lovely things?" Mount murmured.

"Yes, like a snake!" I blurted out.

He laughed.

"That feeling seems strange to me. I love them!"

"Put them away!" I said.

He continued to laugh, and caressed the diamonds with his long, white fingers.

"Wouldn't you like to see Miss Hamerton wear them?" he asked softly.

"No, by Heaven!" I cried. "She's a good woman!"

He laughed more than ever. It was a kind of Oriental laugh, soft, unwholesome.

"I'm afraid you suffer from the Puritan confusion of the ideas of beauty and evil," he said.

"Perhaps I do," I said shortly.

"Some other time I will show you my emeralds and sapphires," he said.

I hated the things, yet I was eager to see them. That shows the effect they had on one.

"How about rubies?" I asked.

He shivered.

"I do not care for rubies. They are an ugly color."

I welcomed the chill, raw air of the street after that scented chamber. After the elegant collector of jewels my crude and commonplace fellow citizens seemed all that was honest and sturdy. I was proud of them.

Yet I enjoyed going to Mount's rooms, too. One could count on being thrilled in one way or another.

VIII

As time went on I dismissed the women of the company from my calculations, though I still kept an eye on them through Sadie. Of the men I had most to do with two, Roland Quarles and Kenton Milbourne—the first because I liked him, and the second because I didn't like him.

Though I had no evidence against him, the idea that Milbourne was the thief had little by little fixed itself in my mind. It was largely a process of elimination. All the others had proved to my satisfaction, in one way or another, that they couldn't have committed the robbery. With the exception of Quarles, I felt sure that none of them had the brains to conceive such a plan, or to hide it afterward.

I didn't know whether Milbourne had the brains; indeed, the more I went with him the less I knew. Yet he did not seem to have a guard over himself. I laid several ingenious little traps to get a sight of his bank-book, but did not succeed in finding out even if he possessed such a thing.

Milbourne was a pasty, hatchet-faced individual, very precise and conscientious in his manner, and exceedingly talkative. That was what put me off. He talked all the time, but I learned nothing from it. With his sharp, foxy features and narrow-set eyes, he had the look of a crook, right enough; but after all looks are not so important as disposition, and this heavy, dull-witted, verbose fellow was the epitome of respectability.

He was not at all popular in the company, principally, I fancy, because of his ostentatious nicety. He bragged of the number of baths he took. He was not a "good fellow." He never joked or joined in pranks with the crowd. In the play he took the part of a brutal thug, a sort of *Bill Sikes*, and played it well, though there was nothing in his appearance to suggest the part. He was the fox, not the bulldog. Imagine a man with the appearance of a fox and the voice of a sheep, and you have Kenton Milbourne.

Shortly after I joined the company I was assigned to share his dressing-room. Milbourne told me that he had requested the stage-manager to make the change, because he objected to the personal habits of his former roommate. So I had every opportunity to observe him.

A lot of good it did me! He talked me to sleep. He would recite all the news of the day, which I had just read for myself, and would comment on it like a country newspaper. You simply could not stop him.

Roland Quarles I cultivated for a different reason. I did not suspect him. As a popular leading juvenile, his life had been lived in the public eye for years, and he could have had no reason for being a thief, unless through utter depravity.

I liked him. I was working hard, but one can't be a detective every waking minute. I sought out Roland to forget my work. I had started disinterestedly with the whole company, but I gradually came to feel an affection for the leading

man, principally because, much to my surprise, he seemed to like me.

I have said that he seemed to be a morose young man. Such was my first impression. He did not make friends easily. He was hated by all the men of the company, because he despised their foolish conceit, and took no pains to hide it. But the women liked him; I may say that all women were attracted to him. He did not plume himself on this. Indeed, it was a matter of great embarrassment to him, and he avoided the women no less than the men.

Quarles was exceedingly good-looking and graceful, and there was not the slightest consciousness of it in his bearing. In that respect he stood almost alone among young actors. He had a proud, reserved, bitter air. As a novelist might say, he seemed to cherish a secret sorrow. His mail at the theater was enormous. He used to stuff it in his pockets without looking at it.

I got my first insight into his character from his treatment of me. Of the entire company he and Milbourne were the only members who never made my meek insignificance a target for unkind wit. Of them all, only this high and mighty young man never tried to make me feel my insignificance.

For a while he ignored me; but after a time it seemed to strike him that I was being put upon by the others, whereupon in an unassuming way he began to make little overtures of friendship. I was charmed.

One night, after the show, he offered me a cigar at the stage door, and we walked down the street smoking and chatting until our ways parted. He was not on during the second act, and after my brief scene I got into the habit of stopping a while in his room before I went up to change.

He had good sense, and it was worth while talking to him. We became very friendly. He was only a year or two younger than I, but to me he seemed like a mere kid.

One night, in the middle of our talk, he said:

"You're not like an actor. You're human!"

"Don't you like actors?" I asked curiously.

"It's a rotten business for men," he said bitterly. "It unsexes them. But here I am! What am I to do about it?"

I learned, as I knew him better, that notwithstanding the adulation of women—or, perhaps, because of it—this popular young actor led an exemplary life. The dazzling palaces of the Great White Way knew him not. It was his custom to go home after the show, have a bite to eat in solitude, and read until he turned in.

One night he invited me to accompany him. He had a modest flat in the Gramercy Square neighborhood, with an adoring old woman to look after him. The cheerful fire, the shaded lamp, the capacious easy chair, gave me a new conception of bachelor comfort. Books were a feature of the place.

"Pretty snug, eh?" he said, following my admiring eyes.

"Well, you're not like an actor, either," said I.

He laughed.

"After the theater, this is like heaven!"

"Why don't you chuck it?" I asked. "You're young."

He shrugged.

"Who wants to give an actor a regular job?"

We had scrambled eggs and sausages. I stayed for a couple of hours talking about the abstract questions that young men love to discuss. When I left, however, he was as much of an enigma to me as when I arrived. He was willing to talk about anything under the sun—except himself. Without appearing to, he foiled all my attempts to draw him out.

Hard upon this growing friendship it was a shock to learn from Sadie, as a result of her work during the days, that it was Roland Quarles who had deposited forty thousand dollars in his bank.

"Impossible!" I said in surprise.

"I got it direct from the bank," she said. "It's the Thirteenth National. He deposited forty thousand in cash on April 6."

My heart sank.

"But that doesn't prove that he stole the pearls," added Sadie, who shared my liking for the young fellow.

"I hope not," I said gloomily; "but if it wasn't he, then our promising clue is no good."

"Possibly he won it on the Stock Exchange."

"Not impossible," I returned, "but highly improbable."

"Well, I can think of ten good reasons why he couldn't have been the thief," Sadie persisted. She had too warm a heart, perhaps, to make an ideal investigator.

That night Roland asked me home to supper again. This was about a week after the first invitation. The old woman had gone to bed, and he cooked creamed oysters in a chafing-dish, while I looked at the newspaper.

"Wouldn't it be nice to have white hands waiting at home to do that for you?" I suggested teasingly.

"Never for me!" he said with a bitter smile.

"Why not?"

"What I can have I don't want. What I want I can never have."

"You never can tell," I said encouragingly.

I was thinking what a superb couple the handsome young pair made on the stage. It seemed low to cross-examine him while he was preparing to feed me, but there was no help for it.

"The market is off again," I said carelessly. "Chance for somebody to make money!"

"How can you make money when the market is going down?" he asked innocently.

If the innocence was assumed, it was mighty well done. However, I told myself his business was acting.

"By selling short," I said.

"I never understood that operation."

I explained it.

"Too complicated for me!" he said.

"Moreover, I consider the whole business of speculation immoral."

I agreed, and switched to talk of solid, permanent investments. He immediately looked interested.

"You seem to know something about such matters," he said. "Suppose a man had a little money to invest, what would you advise?"

"Your savings?" I asked with a smile.

"Lord, I couldn't save anything! No, I have a friend who has a few thousands surplus."

Being anxious to believe well of him, I snatched at this straw. Perhaps a friend had entrusted him with money to invest. Hardly likely, though, and still more unlikely that it would be handed over in cash. I gave him some good advice, and the subject was dropped.

Later we got to talking about acting again. He said in his bitter way:

"I shall soon be out of it now, one way or the other."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"I mean to leave the stage at the close of this engagement, or before."

"What are you going to do?"

"Goodness knows!" he said, with his laugh. "Go to the deuce, I expect!"

I couldn't get anything else out of him. It was all mysterious enough. He sounded utterly reckless when you got below the surface, but somehow it was not the recklessness of a crook.

Worse was to follow. First, however, I must put down how the situation stood with Milbourne, because I shall not return to him for some time.

Kenton Milbourne! I have to smile every time I write it, the fancy appellation was so unsuitable to the tallow-cheeked, hatchet-faced talker who bore it. I believed that Milbourne had stolen the pearls, and I worked hard to justify my belief, but without being able to lay anything bare against him.

Every night he talked me to a standstill. He seemed to be a man totally devoid of individuality or temperament—a mere windbag. But I told myself that dulness is the sharper's favorite and most effective disguise. His talk was a little *too* vapid to be natural, and once in a while I received an impression that he was anything but dull.

One night I said to him, as Roland had said to me:

"You don't seem like an actor. How did you get into this business?"

"Drifted into it," he said. "Always knew I could act, but was too busy with other things. I had an attack of typhoid in Sydney, four years ago, which shattered my health. When I was getting better, a friend gave me the part of a human monster to play, just to help me pass the time. I made a wonderful hit in it. They wouldn't let me stop. Since then I've never been idle. I haven't any conceit, so they offer me the horrible parts."

"Sydney?" I said.

"I was raised in Australia. I came to America last fall because there is a wider field for my art here."

I put this down in my mind as a lie. I do not know the Australians, but I suppose they have their own peculiarities of speech, and this man talked good New York.

I asked idly what parts he had played in Australia. He named three or four, and I made careful mental notes of them. I thought I had him there.

The next day I consulted old files of an Australian stage paper in the rooms of the Actors' Society. To my chagrin, I found his name, Kenton Milbourne, listed in the casts of the very plays he had mentioned.

I was far from being convinced of his genuineness, however. I wrote to Australia for further information.

Under cover of my meek and gentle air, I continued to watch him closely. I could have sworn that he was not aware of it—which shows how one may fool

oneself. His apparent stupidity still blocked me.

One night, when he lifted the tray of his trunk, I saw the edge of a book underneath.

"Anything good to read?" I said, picking it up before he could stop me.

A peculiar look chased across his face, which was anything but stupidity. The title of the book was "The World's Famous Jewels."

"Aha, my man!" I thought. "That's not in my line," I said, dropping the book.

This was how matters stood when things began to happen which drove all thought of Kenton Milbourne out of my mind.

The next day Sadie came into the office to report, looking so confoundedly pretty that it drove the detective business clean out of my mind for the moment. What with her thirty dollars a week from the theater and her additional salary as an operative, which Miss Hamerton insisted on her taking, Sadie was in comparatively affluent circumstances, and for the first time in her life she was able to dress as a pretty girl ought. With her spring hat and suit, her dainty gloves and boots, all purchased at good shops, she was as smart a little lady as you'd find from one end of New York to the other.

"You look sweet enough to eat!" I said, grinning at her like a Cheshire cat.

"Cut it out!" she said, with her high and mighty air. "It's business hours. I'm operative S. F."

"What's that for—swell figure?"

"Wait till after the whistle blows!"

"After hours you're Miss Covington, the actress, and I'm not allowed to know you."

"Well, there's Sunday," she suggested.

"But this is only Tuesday."

"I've got to show respect to my boss, haven't I?"

"What if I kissed you anyhow?"

"I'd box your ears!" she said, quick as lightning.

And she would. I sighed, and came back to earth. It was not that I was afraid of the box on the ears, but she was right, and I knew it. As soon as I started that line of talk, I resigned my proper place as the boss of the establishment.

"What's new?" I asked.

"I found out something interesting to-day," she said. "Miss Hamerton's in love with Roland Quarles."

"I guessed that long ago," I said calmly.

Sadie was much taken aback. Evidently she had expected to stun me.

"You never said anything about it," she told me, pouting.

"No—I left it for you to find out for yourself."

"She never believed he had anything to do with the robbery," Sadie added, with a touch of defiance.

"Then why was she so distressed in the beginning?"

"Well, there was something that would have looked like evidence to a man," Sadie said scornfully; "so, naturally, she didn't want to tell you."

"Did she tell you?" I asked, a little huffed at the thought that Sadie was getting deeper in the confidence of my client than I.

"Yes, to-day. She didn't tell me about her feelings, of course. I guessed that part."

"What is this mysterious thing?"

"She only told me because since she saw the cryptogram she knows there couldn't be anything in it."

This was getting denser instead of clearer.

"What was there about the cryptogram that eased her mind?" I asked.

"She knows that it couldn't have been written to Roland Quarles, because he has no idea of leaving the company."

"Oh, hasn't he?" I thought to myself. How strangely loving women reason! Aloud I said: "Now for the thing that a mere man would have considered evidence!"

"Don't try to be sarcastic," said Sadie. "It doesn't suit you."

"Who's forgetting that I'm the boss now?" I said severely.

She made a face at me, and went on:

"It seems that Miss Hamerton and Roland Quarles had a bet on about the pearls." This was something new. I pricked up my ears. "She laughed at him because he thought he knew something about jewels, and she says he scarcely knows a pearl from an opal. They argued about it, and she finally bet him a box of cigars against a box of gloves that he wouldn't be able to tell when she wore the genuine pearls. That was how she came to wear them the night they were stolen."

"The deuce it was!" I exclaimed.

"But he has never spoken about it since. She believes that he has forgotten all about the bet."

I walked up and down the room, considering from every view-point what this might mean.

"You needn't look like that," said Sadie. "We know he didn't do it. Wouldn't he have paid his bet if he had?"

"It seems so," I answered, not knowing what to believe.

"There's another reason," said Sadie, "sufficient for a woman."

"What's that?"

"He's in love with her. He's making love to her now. He couldn't do that if he had robbed her."

"I don't know," I said grimly. "If he could rob her, I suspect he could make love to her."

At the theater that night, I devoted my attention pretty exclusively to Quarles. Heaven knows I was not anxious to ruin the young fellow, but Sadie's communication, taken in connection with the cryptogram and with that mysterious cash deposit, was beginning to look like pretty strong evidence. This being my first case, I attached more importance to "evidence" than I would now.

I was in his dressing-room when he left to go on for the third act. He had only a short scene at the beginning, and as he went out he asked me to wait till he came off.

I watched him go with a sinking heart, for I hated to do what I had to do. He was so handsome, so graceful, and, with that burden on his breast, so invariably kind to me, that I felt like a wretch. Nevertheless, I told myself, for the sake of all of us I had to discover the painful secret that he was hiding.

I knew exactly how long I had before he would return. I swung the door almost shut, as if the wind had blown it, and made a rapid, thorough search. There was a pile of letters on his dressing-table, as yet unopened. Nothing suspicious there, and nothing in the drawers of his dressing-table. There was no trunk in the room.

His street-coat was on a form hanging from a hook. I frisked the pockets. There was a handful of letters and papers in the breast-pocket. Shuffling them over, I came upon a sheet of dimity note-paper without an envelope. Opening it, I beheld a communication in cryptograph exactly like the other.

I could hear the voices on the stage. Quarles was about to come off. I hastily returned all the papers to his pocket, as I had found them, except the cryptogram. That I put in my own pocket.

When he came in we picked up our conversation where we had dropped it.

As soon as I got home I made haste to translate my find. I had saved the numerical key I used before. I instantly found that it fitted this communication also, and this is what I got:

I. has known of her loss for a couple of weeks. She has put two detectives in the company—Faxon and the girl Covington. I have this straight. Watch yourself. J.

So this was why Quarles cultivated my friendship, I thought, feeling all the bitterness of finding myself betrayed!

I could no longer doubt my evidence. My friendly feeling for the young fellow was swept away.

IX

THE next morning I awoke with a leaden weight on my breast. I had no zest in a day which brought with it the necessity of telling Miss Hamerton what I had learned.

I put off the evil moment as long as possible. During the morning Sadie came into the office for instructions. I had not the heart to tell her. I sent her over to Newark on a wild-goose chase in connection with some of McArdle's activities.

I was not expecting Miss Hamerton that afternoon. At three o'clock I called her up, and said that I had something important to report. She said that she was expecting a visitor, and did not wish to go out. Could I come to her?

This pleased me, for since I had to strike her down it was more merciful to do it at home. I went.

She had never looked lovelier. Her room was a bower of spring flowers, and in a pale-yellow dress she was like the fairest daffodil among them. She was full of happiness, her cheeks glowing, her eyes sparkling. It did not make my task any easier. Indeed, I angrily rebelled from it; but she was already asking me what was the matter.

I told her—bunglingly enough, Heaven knows—of the second cryptogram, and where I had found it. It crushed her like a flower trodden underfoot. Presently, however, she began to fight.

"The first thing the thief would do when he found himself under surveillance," she faltered, "would be to try to divert your attention to some one else."

"He would hardly choose one ordinarily so far above suspicion as the leading man," I said reluctantly.

"He may have known, since he knows so much, that you were already suspicious of Ro—of the other."

She could not get Quarles's name out. I felt like the criminal myself, trying to convince her against her heart.

"Taken by itself, the letter would not be conclusive; but with the other things—"

"What other things?"

"Well, his provoking you by a bet to wear the genuine pearls."

"There's nothing in that," she said quickly. "If he had had an ulterior motive, he would have spoken of the bet since. He would have lost it, wouldn't he, to keep us from suspecting?"

I conceded the reasonableness of this—taken by itself.

"But his bank-account?"

"Bank-account?" she repeated, startled. We had not told her of this.

"On April 6 Mr. Quarles deposited forty thousand dollars in cash in the Thirteenth National Bank."

All the light went out of her face.

"Oh! Are you sure?" she gasped.

"I have seen the entry in his pass-book. I verified it at the bank."

Her heart still fought for him.

"But my necklace was worth only twenty-five thousand; and a thief would never be able to realize its full value."

I shrugged. Naturally, I did not care to add to her unhappiness by telling her that the pearls were worth half a million. She thought from my shrug that I meant to convey that if her lover had been guilty of one theft, why not others? It crushed her anew. She had no more fight left in her. She sank back dead white and bereft of motion.

"He's coming here," she whispered. "What shall I say to him? What shall I say?"

"Don't see him," I cried.

"I must! I promised."

I sat there, I don't know for how long, staring at the carpet like a clown. The telephone rang, and we both jumped as at a pistol-shot. I offered to answer it, but she waved me back. She went to the instrument falteringly; but I was surprised at the steadiness of her voice.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Let him come up," she said firmly.

By her white, stricken face, I knew who it was. I jumped up in a kind of panic.

"I will have myself carried up to the roof-garden, so that I won't meet him," I said.

"No, *please!*" she murmured. "I want you here."

"But he must not meet me!" I cried.

"Wait in the next room." Her voice broke piteously. "Oh, I must have some one here—some one whom I can trust!"

What was I to do? I obeyed very unwillingly.

As soon as Quarles entered I found that the transom over the door was open, and I could hear everything that passed between them. Of all the difficult things that have been forced on me in the way of business, that half-hour's eavesdropping was as bad as any.

He must have been highly wrought up, because he apparently failed to notice her state. His very first speech was tragically unfortunate. He spoke in a harsh, strained voice, as if the painful thing that he had kept hidden so long was breaking out in spite of him.

"Irma, how soon can you replace me in the cast?"

"Eh?" she murmured, and I could imagine the painful start she suppressed.

"I want to get out. I can't stand it any longer!"

"But why?" she whispered.

"I hate acting! It's not a man's work."

"Have you just discovered that?" she asked with a little note of scorn, very painful to hear.

"No," he said gloomily. "I've always known it. If I had been left to myself, I never would have acted; but I came of a family of actors. I was brought up to it. I kept on because it was all I knew. It is only since I have acted with you that it has become more than I can bear."

"Why with me?" she whispered.

"Because I love you!" he said in a harsh, abrupt voice.

"Ah!" The sound was no more than a painful catch in her breath.

"Oh, you needn't tell me I'm a presumptuous fool!" he burst out. "I know it already. You don't know the height of my presumption yet. I love you! The silly make-believe of love that I have to go through with you every night drives me mad. I love you! I am ashamed to make my living by exhibiting a pretense of love!"

"It was your father's profession, and your mother's," she murmured.

"They were the real thing," he said gloomily. "They had a genuine call. They loved their work. I hark back to an earlier strain, I suppose. I have no feeling for the stage. I hate the tinsel and show and make-believe. I want to lead a real life with you—"

No man has any right to hear another man bare his heart like this. I went to the open window and leaned out. I had forgotten Roland's supposed guilt. My instinct told me that a guilty man could not have spoken so.

Even on the window-sill, though I tried not to hear, an occasional word reached me. We were so high up that little of the street noises reached us. By and by I heard Roland say "money," and I was drawn back into the room. I felt that it was my business to hear this.

He was still pleading with his heart in his voice.

"A month ago I would just have left without saying anything to you. I don't know that I am fit for anything but acting. I could not ask you to give it up without having something else to offer you. I suffer so to see you on the stage—your name, your person, your doings, all public property! I cannot stand seeing you show your lovely self to the applause of those vulgar fools!"

"You are mad!" she whispered.

"I know—but I have had a stroke of luck!"

"Luck?"

"I have come into some money—oh, nothing much, but enough to give me a start in some new country, if you could come with me. Oh, I am a fool to think it, but I had to tell you that I loved you. You would be quite justified in laughing and showing me the door. But I love you! It seemed cowardly to go away without telling you."

"You are asking me to give up my profession?" she murmured unsteadily.

"I ask nothing. I expect nothing. But if you could! You'd have to give it up. It would kill me otherwise." He laughed harshly. "Am I not ridiculous? Tell me to go!"

"I am not so enamored of make-believe, either," she murmured.

She was weakening! I trembled for her. This wretched business had to be cleared up before they could hope for any happiness.

"If I loved you, I could give it up," she whispered; "but I am not sure!"

It was a glimpse of heaven to him.

"Irma!" He cried her name over and over brokenly. "My dear love! Then there is a chance—I never expected—oh, don't raise me up only to cast me down lower than before!"

I went to the window-sill again and leaned out. There I was still when she came in. She was trembling and breathing fast.

"He has gone," she said. She led me back into the outer room. She noticed that the transom was open. "You heard?" she asked.

"Some," I said uncomfortably; "more than I wanted to. Have you promised to marry him?"

She shook her head.

"I have promised nothing. I asked for time."

"Good!" I said involuntarily.

She looked at me, startled.

"You heard!" she said defiantly. "Were they the words of a guilty man?"

"Not if I know anything about human nature," I replied promptly.

"Oh, thank you!" she said. She was very near tears. "Anything else would be unbelievable!"

"Give me one day more," I suggested.

"No! No!" she cried with surprising energy. "I will not carry this tragic farce any further. I hate the pearls now! I would not wear them if I did get them back. They are gone. Let them go!"

"But, Miss Hamerton—" I persisted.

"Not another word!" she cried. "My mind is made up!"

"I must speak," I said doggedly; "because you as much as said that you depended on getting honest advice from me. You can't stop at this point. If you marry Mr. Quarles, the fact that you have suspected him, though it was only for a moment, will haunt you all your life. No marriage is a bed of roses, and inevitably, when trouble comes, your grim specter will rise and mock you. It must be definitely laid in its grave before you can marry the man!"

The bold style of my speech made her pause. I had never spoken to her in that way before.

"I hope you know it's not the job I'm after," I went on. "I never had work to do that I enjoyed less; but you put it up to me to give you honest advice."

"I can't spy on the man I love," she faltered.

"You can't marry the man you suspect," I returned.

"I don't suspect him."

"The suspicious circumstances are not yet explained."

"Very well, then—I'll send for him to come back, and he will explain them."

I had a flash of insight into the character of my young friend.

"No!" I cried. "If he knew that you had ever suspected him, he would never forgive you!"

"Then what do you want me to do?" she cried.

"Give me twenty-four hours to produce proofs of his innocence."

She gave in with a gesture.

(To be continued in the September number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)



WHAT THE GOVERNMENT DOES FOR BUSINESS



by William C. Redfield

Secretary of Commerce of the United States

THERE has been a good deal of talk, in past years, to the effect that the United States government hinders business, and among those who are uninformed a certain amount of such talk will remain, though it is rapidly diminishing as the facts come to be known.

It is undoubtedly true that under several successive administrations business that was operating in defiance of law has been by law held to an increasingly strict account. It was never as true, however, as it is to-day that business is being actively and affirmatively helped by the government. The Department of Commerce exists for that chief purpose, and whole services are devoted to it with very definite and practical results.

When leaders of business openly state that the cooperation of the government with business is both effective and intelligent; when business of the largest type consults a government department and solicits its assistance; when repeated orders for large amounts are brought to this country by the active work of government officers; when new industries, unknown here hitherto, are bodily established in the United States, it is time to admit the plain fact that the government is to-day an active aid to the American business man.

The Fisheries Service, for instance, has within the last year developed two new

articles of food for the wholesale and retail fish trade, neither of which was used before. The sea-mussel is carried in stock by a great many retailers in the East, and the tilefish, which a few months ago was unknown save to science, has been sold at retail in New York alone at the average rate of fifty thousand pounds a week. Both of these new and wholesome and cheap foods were put upon the market to the benefit of dealer and consumer alike by a special division of the Bureau of Fisheries devoted to that purpose.

What does the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce do? The answer is that it does nothing but promote American commerce abroad. It reaches out into all the world and gets business for American manufacturers, and it is on the job in every continent all the time.

With the assistance of this particular service a big smelting and refining company secured recently the business of smelting Bolivian tin ores, which has heretofore been carried on wholly in Europe. This is a new industry in America. We buy tin ores from Bolivia, smelt them here, and give employment to more labor and capital at home; and we sell Bolivia goods for which she pays with the credit thus created.

The commercial attaché of the Department of Commerce assigned to Paris

visited Madrid, and there, with our ambassador, called upon the King of Spain. From the interview resulted the withdrawal of a tax of about one dollar and twenty cents per ton on importations of American coal into Spain. This opened a new market, and every available vessel has since been busy carrying our coal to Spain.

Information furnished by the service has resulted in a contract for a new telephone service for the city of Bergen, in Norway; for a petroleum pipe-line in Rumania; for constructing a public building in Formosa and a railroad on the same island; and for a coal-handling plant in Africa.

BRANCHES FOR LOCAL SERVICE

Suppose that two years ago a man in St. Louis, desiring the assistance of the government's foreign service on a matter of business, had sought for the local office of the Department of Commerce. He would have sought for it in vain. There was no such thing there. None of the eight branch offices of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce now located in the cities of New York, Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, Atlanta, New Orleans, San Francisco, and Seattle are as yet three years old; yet the service they render to business appears in the fact that more than thirteen thousand representatives of American firms called at the New York office alone during 1915, and sixty-one thousand letters were received there that year, while one hundred and fifty representatives of foreign firms made use of the office as headquarters.

From relations with one of these foreign visitors there arose a business arrangement with a house in eastern Europe under which forty thousand bales of cotton per year for five years are now purchased under contract. Any one who will trouble to figure what that amounts to will find that this single transaction more than pays the cost of operating all the branch offices of the service during the past year.

Three years ago there was no such thing as an American commercial attaché. Now there are ten, and they have abundantly made good. They are located at London, Berlin, Petrograd, Paris, Peking, Melbourne, Buenos Aires, Lima, Rio de Janeiro, and Santiago (Chile). These are officers of the Department of Commerce who are accredited through our embassies to give them standing, but who are servants of American commerce solely, and have no diplomatic duties. They are trained business people, speaking the language of the country to which they go, or one current there in business circles, and they devote themselves exclusively and continuously to building up American trade.

Our ambassador at Rio desired that the commercial attaché should have his office in the embassy, because he was so helpful. More than one man of large affairs has expressed appreciation of the services of our attaché at Petrograd. Our minister to Holland has willingly acknowledged the services of our attaché, who has helped him out in that country during the war.

The same is true of all. Each has labored and is laboring effectively and well, and each provides a new lever for American trade. Now we hope for more of them, and are asking Congress to provide ten additional attachés.

MISSIONARIES OF AMERICAN TRADE

To these permanent officers is added a force of traveling men, who are specialists in some particular line. They also speak the language of the countries where they go. Taking their line, they study it in one country after another.

Before they go, they consult here the industry they represent. They communicate through the service with it during their absence. On their return they again go to the industry, and by word of mouth explain what they have learned. They bring samples; they learn difficulties and ways to meet them; they find the methods of our competitors; they ascertain

what is left undone, and how it can be done.

In short, they are traveling students on behalf of American trade. It has happened that when one of them was here some months digesting and reporting the results of his work abroad, an association of manufacturers requested that he might be sent abroad again, because he was of so great use to them.

The service, in addition, daily draws a vast fund of information from our consular force, never so active and efficient as now. A record is kept of the commercial effectiveness of our consuls, and on that record a large number of promotions were recently made in the consular service.

The spirit of cooperation between the consular force of the State Department and the officers of the Department of Commerce is close and cordial. The one supplements the other. There is no room for antagonism. Each is the other's friend and servant. So, from hundreds of sources, covering every important country and port in the world, there comes daily, by mail and wire, information for American commerce. Is it practical? The men of business here and the men who get wages because of it think so.

THE DEPARTMENT PERIODICAL

This information is extensively used. If the business man is a subscriber to *Commerce Reports*, he knows a part of it. If he is not a subscriber, he ought to be. For this daily publication brings to his door, for a trifling annual subscription—only enough to cover paper and printing—the information which a trained staff of observers is collecting all round the world. By means of it the department sends out every afternoon into thousands of business offices all over the land the latest commercial information available, some of it received by cable the same day.

In fact, the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce is a large publisher.

Commerce Reports is accompanied by frequent supplements, each dealing intensively with the business affairs of a particular country. These are from time to time gathered together and published, making a continuous review of the affairs of that country as respects American trade. Monographs are constantly prepared on special lines of trade and industry. All of these are made available at a small cost through the superintendent of documents, in Washington. They can also be had at each of the branch offices and cooperating branches.

Through the eight branches already mentioned, each of which has a trained commercial officer at its head, the department places the business community in touch with the trade opportunities published in the daily *Commerce Reports*. Every service which the main office can render is available at each branch office. In addition, a system has developed whereby chambers of commerce in important cities who will maintain an officer devoted to foreign trade are made cooperating branches of the service, and are furnished with all the information available.

The whole organization is new, so far as concerns the branch offices, the cooperating branches, and the commercial attachés. Together they form a more effective means than any other government possesses of gathering knowledge of foreign markets, and of transmitting that knowledge to the business world for whose benefit it is maintained.

SERVICE TO FOREIGN VISITORS

Certain special services are also rendered. A delegation of important buyers from abroad is met at our boundary by an officer of the department speaking the visitors' language; and he accompanies them, if desired, throughout our country. Such a case was that of the recent group of Chinese merchants who visited America. Our commercial agent met them at San Francisco, accompanied them in their travels, and remained with them until

they sailed for China from our Pacific coast. This officer spoke Chinese, and was able to bring the visitors into close and personal touch with many American business men.

Important foreign visitors are escorted by an officer of the department who is a specialist in their particular line. He introduces them generally throughout the industries in which they are interested.

These various ways of rendering service have been both a surprise and a source of gratification to some of our industries, which knew nothing of them.

THE WORK OF STANDARDIZATION

The Bureau of Standards deals with our commerce intensively. It studies the problems underlying industry, and through its great research laboratories works out and develops the facts and the laws which industry needs to know. To-day, by its study of the standardizing of colors, it is serving the cotton-oil industry, and this great industry has not failed to express its cordial appreciation of what has been done. In this special study, too, the oleomargarin industry, the butter industry, and others in which color is an essential factor, are interested. The American Society of Refrigerating Engineers commends the work this service has done in the study of refrigeration constants.

The Bureau of Standards operates a large plant for the purpose not of profit, but of developing truths out of which others may profit. It conducts the government testing, and arose in large part out of the requirement for such tests; but it has developed far beyond the mere testing of government purchases.

It has issued certificates of quality on which large foreign transactions in American materials have been based—transactions that would have been difficult, if not impossible, without the certificate. In recent months it has developed the fact that American clays are at least equal to the best German clays for the making of refractories, and

through its studies there has been developed and established in this country, within the last year, the business of making chemical porcelain.

In a recent mail received by this bureau there were inquiries from eighty-five industries for help of one or another kind, and it is visited daily by officials of industrial and public-utility corporations who need its assistance. It conducts studies into textiles and rubber, paper, leather, glass, clay products of all kinds, steel and bronze, and many other branches of production. It operates a large electrical laboratory, wherein the problems and the practise of electricity are studied and developed.

It is now building a large chemical laboratory, in order that chemistry in its practical applications may have a larger share of governmental attention. It is studying building materials and developing a special apparatus for the investigation of the value of fire-resisting substances.

Here is an untiring scientific servant of American commerce, whose work is developing in breadth and thoroughness, whose decisions no man questions, and whose usefulness only those who do not understand it will deny.

AN INVITATION TO BUSINESS MEN

Thus much is said that American business men may know their servant, who serves their commerce well and seeks to serve it better. It is not a complete statement of facts. Indeed, it is a very partial one. It is befitting a public service, however, that the eye of the public should be turned upon it, and therefore on behalf of these and the other services of the Department of Commerce the most earnest invitation is extended to the business public to inquire into what is being done.

There has come to us an increasing sense of the difficulty of making the work of the Department of Commerce known to the men for whom it is done. There is hardly any medium that can

do so now. The problem of establishing new industries in the United States is one with which we are dealing all the time; and several of them have come into existence within the last year.

I often think, sitting in my office, in those few, rare minutes when I get time to think at all, how the work reaches out from the department. I wish it were possible to have the business men of the country, one by one, to sit here and see the things as they come over the desk, from where they come, and the many, many subjects they cover.

THE BATTLE FOR WORLD TRADE

As business men we are looking out into a world in which it is only reasonable to expect that the future will see very keen commercial and industrial rivalry. What is to happen after the war is a question on every man's lips, but there are none so bold as to give, as yet, a very positive answer.

We have had two great rivals in the world at large, in the commercial contests of the world. Those two are Germany and England. Each has had its marked characteristics, as we ourselves have had. The methods of the three nations have been as unlike as they are different in their localities and temperaments.

The German has applied science to business as no nation has ever done, and he has added to the science of research the equally important science of organization. The Englishman has brought to his business a certain peculiar type of courage, backed by the largest amount of free capital the world has ever seen gathered in the hands of any one people.

He has sold all round the world to industries and customers kindred to himself as no others have ever been able to do.

We have lacked the science; we have lacked the organization; we have lacked the free capital. It is but less than two years since we ceased to be the world's debtor. We have not had the courage of the Englishman; we have rather, in the foreign field, been characterized by timidity. We have had, however, a keen alertness of mind and a quickness of commercial adjustment which have saved us. By those means, and without the facilities that our rivals have had, we had built up prior to the war a foreign trade approximating two and one-half billions of dollars per annum—a most remarkable testimony to the competing power of the American manufacturer, in face of the fact that he lacked the facilities of his great competitors.

Now the affairs of the belligerents themselves are largely in our keeping; and despite what patriotic devotees may hear and say, I think the world knows that America is holding the even balance of good-will as far as is humanly possible, and that she desires the friendship of all and extends her friendship to all.

Our resources are undiminished; the land abounds in wealth; our coffers are full and running over; we are sought for in all lands as the one secure and peaceful source of supply of the things which all men need. Meanwhile, to every effort for the growth of business, for the security and advance of commerce, the department which I have the privilege of representing will lend an attentive ear and a willing hand.

AFTER PARTING

It has taken so long to put out the flame,
To say to myself, "I have come to the end;
Now I forget her—even her name—
Now I can think of her simply as friend!"
But oh, in the night, a spark is still there—
I see it in dreams, I am lost in my shame;
And I ache, in the dark, for a glimpse of her hair,
And alone in my sorrow I whisper her name!

Charles Hanson Towne

NEW YORK'S NEW POLICE



by Frank M. O'Brien



JOSEPH KELLY, halted by the crowd at Fifth Avenue, set down his plumber's stove and watched the police of New York pass by in their annual parade.

Personally, he had always pretended to despise the "cops." He really hated them, because he had that senseless American fear of the police. Now, for the first time, he found himself admiring them. The blue-clad files that clicked past looked clean, sober, well fed, vigorous, and happy. Also—and this appealed to Kelly—they were paid regularly. In his profession of near-plumber he had a good many missing pay-days.

For the first time since his childhood it seemed to him that there was something in being "on the cops." Whereupon he decided to be a policeman.

Kelly saw his district leader, who told him that the police were "pretty near out of politics" now; that getting on the force was a matter of passing the civil-service examination and standing the gaff of a probationary period.

Another man in the political clubhouse, a former sergeant of police, looked Kelly over and told him that he might do, if he had a noddle on him. Kelly, he saw, was between twenty-one and twenty-nine, was free from marked deformities, had not a red nose, was neither fat nor skinny, possessed at least twenty teeth, and breathed through his nostrils. His feet were large, but not flat, and he could hear with both ears. A glance showed that Kelly was well above five feet eight inches in height, and weighed more than a hundred and forty pounds. In outward appearance there was no reason why Kelly should

not be transformed from a near-plumber into a complete policeman.

So Kelly went to the office of the Civil Service Commission, and got a blank. In it he set down the fact that he was a citizen, twenty-two years old, born in East One Hundred and Sixteenth Street, educated at a public school, and unmarried; that he had been arrested at the age of fourteen for breaking a window; that he drank beer sparingly—an elastic word; that he had never been in the army or the navy—if he had been, his honorable discharge would have been required; that he had been employed by J. J. Doe, Smith & Jones, and Brown & Murphy. Four neighbors who did not keep saloons testified that Kelly was of good moral character, and that they would trust him with money or in a fight.

Kelly filed this blank and waited, and after a few months he was informed that the Civil Service Commission would examine him as to his qualifications for appointment as patrolman.

THE CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

The medical examiners took him in hand, and pawed and poked and taped him as if he were a candidate for a million-dollar insurance policy. They measured his chest and limbs, and computed his natural strength and his development. Then they turned him over to the physical examiners to test the strength which they had computed.

Kelly was told to "chin and dip" on the horizontal bar twenty times. He stopped at eighteen, getting only ninety per cent for this stunt. He had to lift a sixty-pound dumbbell above his head

with each hand. He had to lie on his back and, when a thirty-five-pound weight had been strapped to his shoulders, rise to a sitting posture. He had to jump over a hurdle three and one-half feet high. They led him to machines with gages on them, and tested the muscles of his arms and legs and chest and back. His grip, which might some day hold the collar of a murderer, was carefully noted.

Kelly passed, and they sent him away, telling him to prepare for the mental examination. He bought a set of old civil-service questions, and renewed his acquaintance with and hatred of the things that had annoyed him at school. He went into the physical examination with his chin in the air, but he went into the mental test with sweating palms, even after all his cribbing.

He was nearly a day at the horrible ordeal. They asked him to tell where a license to sell milk was procurable; who was the chief executive of the United States; what he would do if he saw a dead cat in the gutter; whether it was legal to sprinkle a yard at certain seasons; how he defined manslaughter; what was the difference between larceny by night and larceny by day; how many square rods there are in eight square miles; what to do when a manufacturer uses too much soft coal; how a policeman should act if he saw a light in a house that was boarded up for the summer; the proper course to pursue in the case of a bigamist who has been seized by his first wife; and what is the difference between 3,876,543 and 9,987,536.

One of the examiners read off a statement to the effect that Charles Johnson, *alias* Herbert Noggin, five feet ten inches tall, weight one hundred and fifty-four pounds, age thirty-two, hair brown, eyes blue, crescent scar on third finger of left hand, was missing. Kelly had to write that down as he remembered it.

Kelly passed, a mystery to himself and all his relations — except, of course, his mother. Then the Civil Service Commis-

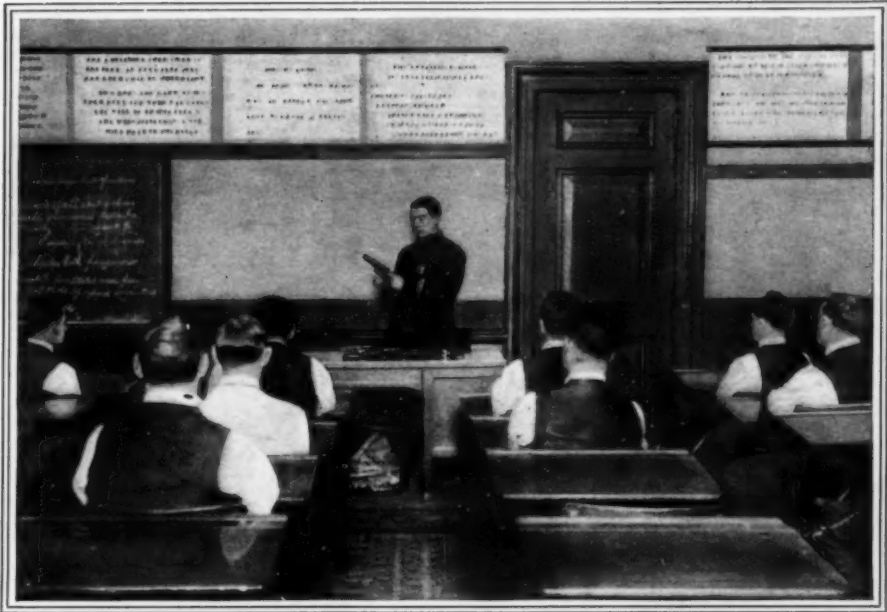
sion sent men out to learn the details of Kelly's past; for every policeman, like every saint, has some kind of a past. The investigators questioned every man for whom Kelly had ever worked; the magistrate who tried him for breaking the window; his old school-teachers, his neighbors, and the patrolman on Kelly's beat. The conclusion was that Kelly would do.

ON THE ELIGIBLE LIST

But months passed, and Kelly was still a plumber's understudy. Sometimes he doubted whether he would ever get on the police force. He thought of turning teamster, because he knew that one of the big coal firms stood ready to pay twenty-one dollars a week to any man who was on the eligible list for patrolman; and twenty-one dollars a week figured out five dollars a month more than he would get in his first year as a policeman. But one day, after a bunch of old-timers had been retired from the force for disability, Kelly got a letter saying that the police commissioner had appointed him a patrolman of the seventh grade, and that he was to report at headquarters at once, if he cared to be a policeman.

Kelly reported. Then the police commissioner sent his own investigators out to investigate Kelly's past once more. That window, broken in 1906, had to be looked into again. It must be made certain whether Kelly had ever been connected with the "liquor interests." But even the owner of the broken window said that Joe was a good lad, and everybody agreed that Kelly never had enough money to be connected with the liquor or any other interest.

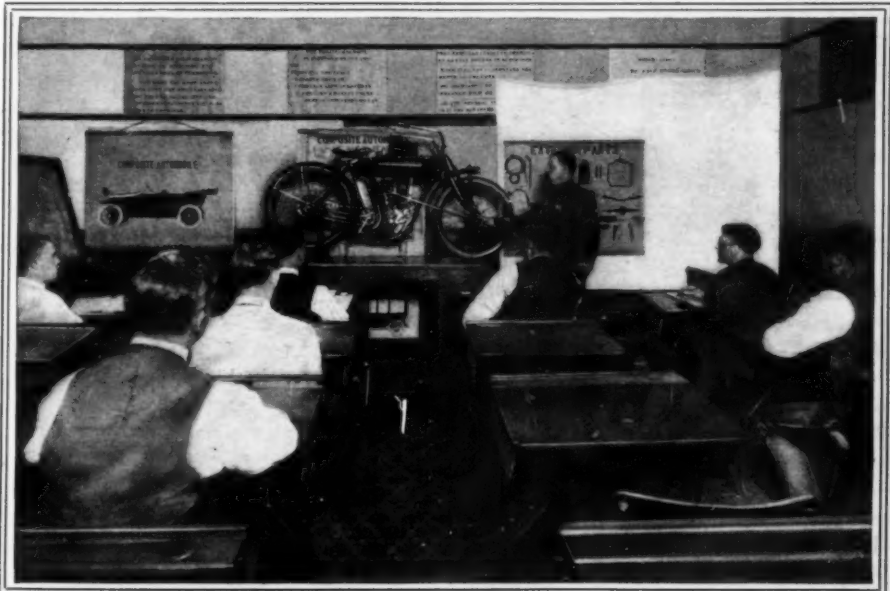
Meanwhile Kelly had been sent to a board of police surgeons, who poked his husky body as enthusiastically as the doctors had done at the civil service examination. These police surgeons wanted to be sure that Kelly would not become prematurely a drag on the police pension fund. At last, convinced that the youth had neither arteriosclerosis nor falling of



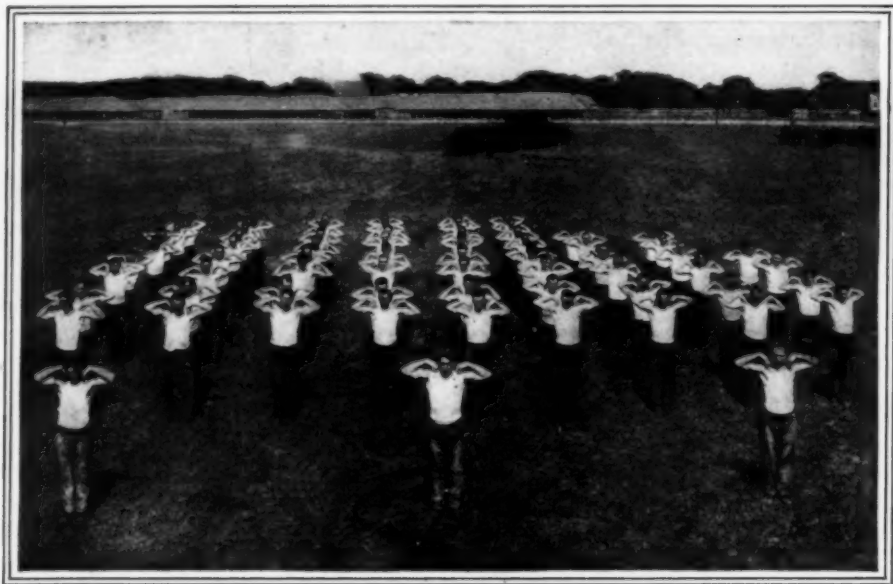
IN THE NEW YORK POLICE TRAINING-SCHOOL—A LESSON IN THE USE OF THE POLICEMAN'S SERVICE WEAPON

the arches, they sent him along—to the training-school, the really big thing in the modern theory of police perfection.

For three months Kelly and three dozen other rookies went to school from nine to five o'clock every day.



IT IS PART OF A NEW YORK POLICEMAN'S TRAINING TO LEARN THE VARIOUS MAKES OF MOTOR-CARS AND MOTORCYCLES, AND TO UNDERSTAND THEIR CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION



SETTING-UP DRILL FOR A SQUAD OF POLICE RECRUITS

"You have got a lot of things to learn and a lot to forget before you put on a uniform," said the inspector in charge.

WHAT A POLICEMAN MUST LEARN

So they taught Kelly discipline and deportment; taught him to obey, promptly and exactly; taught him to be loyal, not to grumble, not to criticise his superiors or their orders. They told him not to chew tobacco or gum, or talk loud or much, or discuss police business, or make appointments to meet friends on post. They told him that his wife and children, if he ever had any, must not make use of his position. They told him to be the doctor, the friend, and the interpreter of the people of the metropolis.

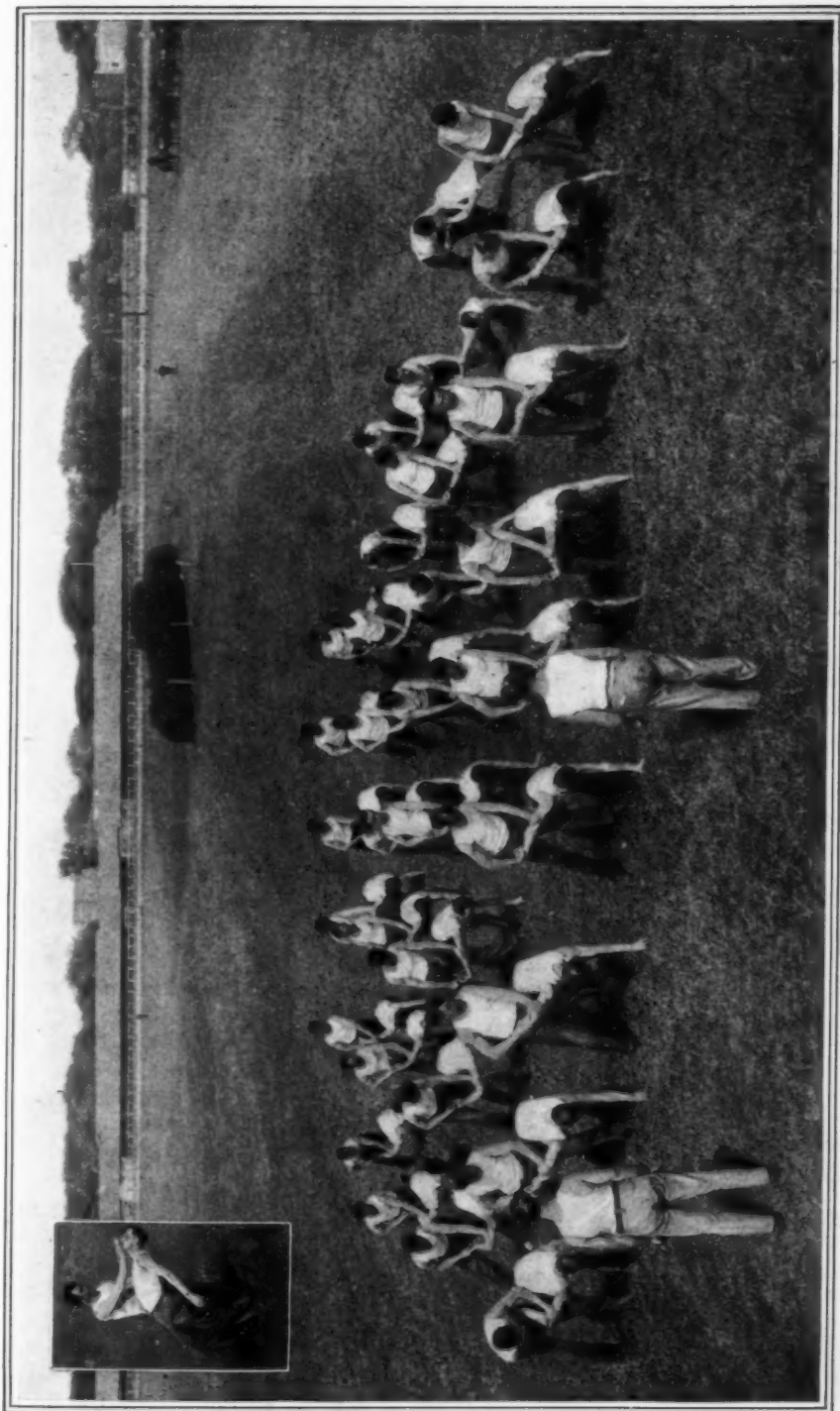
He learned that, after having answered the same question forty times in a day, he must reply to the forty-first questioner with courtesy and patience. He learned that he must warn persons who seem about to violate the law, and then must never overlook disregard of the warning. He learned that he should take calisthenic exercise ten minutes a day; that he should never stand with his hands in front

of him; that he must be clean, quick, snappy.

They told him how to patrol "to the right, shield to the curb," so that his superior officers, patrolling to the left, would meet him; to leave his post without hesitation in the performance of his duty, but not to be decoyed from the post; to give his name, rank, precinct, and shield number to Central when using the telephone while on tour.

They told him to remember, when drawing his revolver, that it is better to let the guilty escape than to shoot the innocent. They taught him to cock his pistol with his thumb, getting a steadier aim than a double-acting trigger permits, and to come to a full stop before shooting. They taught him to know the make of a motor-car by the radiator or the hub, and how to time its speed. They taught him how to tell a man's occupation from his dress or carriage.

They taught him what to do when noises came from vacant houses, when store doors were unlocked or street lamps unlighted, when pipes burst in lofts, and when he smelled escaping gas.



PROBATIONARY POLICEMEN RECEIVING INSTRUCTION IN THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHODS OF DEALING WITH A REFRACTORY PRISONER—THE SMALL INSET SHOWS A JIU-JITSU STROKE USED FOR THE SAME PURPOSE

"If you patrol without a purpose," said the lieutenant-teacher, "you will find your work tiresome. It is easier to patrol and observe and listen than to watch the clock."

learned the law of arrests, the difference between felony and misdemeanor. He came to know that he might as well not arrest the ambassador from Ruritania for smoking in the subway because, while



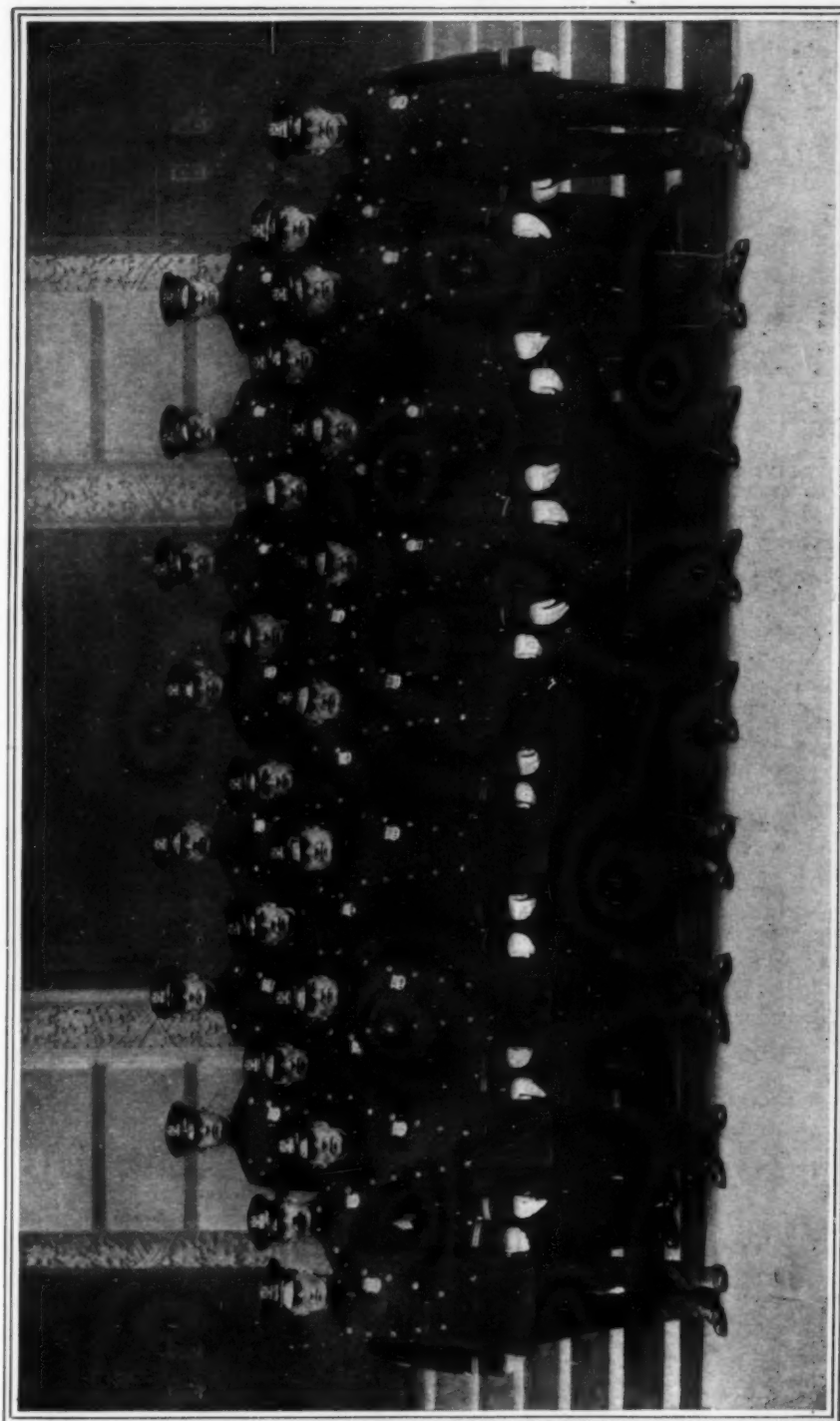
A MOTOR-BICYCLE POLICEMAN IN A SUBURBAN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK RECEIVING INSTRUCTIONS AT A POLICE SIGNAL-STATION

They made Kelly a doctor, at least to the extent of understanding first aid to the injured, artificial respiration, the difference between alcoholic coma and a fractured skull, the thing to do for dog-Lites, freezing, sunstroke, epilepsy, electric shock, burns, and suffocation.

They made Kelly a lawyer. He

the ambassador might not be immune from arrest in the United States, he was immune from punishment here.

"Be careful about children," said the teacher. "Don't interfere with their harmless amusements. Don't separate one from its mother unless it is absolutely necessary. And if a mother calls you



A TYPICAL GROUP OF NEW YORK POLICEMEN—THE "HONOR MEN" OF 1915



THE UP-TO-DATE POLICEMAN IS TRAINED TO GIVE ADVICE RATHER THAN TO MAKE ARRESTS—A NEW YORK OFFICER EXPLAINING THE TRAFFIC REGULATIONS TO A GROUP OF TRUCK-DRIVERS



A TRAFFIC POLICEMAN
DISMOUNTED

up four flights of stairs and then says: 'You'll take Willie away to jail unless he is a good child, won't you?' you must tell the lady that you're sorry, but you won't enter into any conspiracy, however well meant, for the terrorizing of children through the police uniform."

Upon which Kelly decided that for minuteness in instruction the German general staff had nothing on the police department of New York.

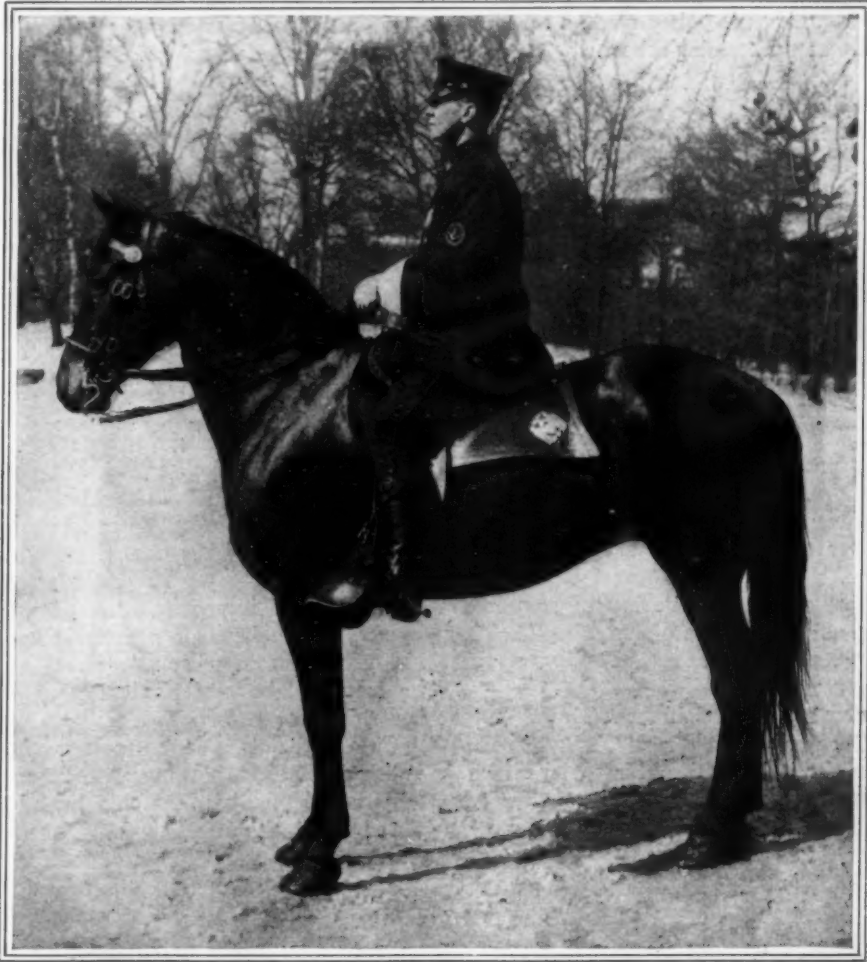
Kelly listened to lec-

tures from old detectives, who told the rookies all about the habits of burglars, flat-thieves, and sneaks, wire-tappers and confidence men, poolroom and stuss-game proprietors, drug-sellers and white slavers. He gained a practical acquaintance with the Sunday laws and the election statutes of the State. He learned the thousand and one ways in which the police have to cooperate with the firemen and the employees of other city departments. He came to a working knowledge of the "speaking portrait" system, and learned for the first time that the pupils of all men's eyes are black.

All study and no play would have made Kelly a dull rookie. He got play twice a day in the form of revolver practise and physical training. Two policemen spent all their time in the pistol-gallery, explaining the art of hitting the burglar with the thirty-eight-caliber bullet. Another officer, with a nineteen-inch neck and unlimited patience, taught the youths the art of jiu-jitsu, in whatever respects it would be valuable to them in the subjugation of tough prisoners. Six other tutors gave lessons in boxing and wrestling with the same object. A gymnastic expert put them through drills for the limbering of their unknown muscles.

No time was wasted on things a policeman could never need. The rookies did not climb an ordinary ladder. They climbed an iron fire-escape, such as is standard in New York tenement-houses. And, as fire-escapes do not reach the

procedure took the rookies to the magistrates' courts, to train them not to be bench-shy, and to make them familiar with the tactics of lawyers and criminals. The instructors in detection took the men to the detective bureau every morning, to



THE FINISHED PRODUCT OF THE MODERN SYSTEM OF TRAINING A POLICEMAN—A MOUNTED OFFICER OF THE NEW YORK POLICE FORCE

ground, they were taught how to reach the first rung by leaping from a stirrup formed by the joined hands of a brother rookie. They had army drill, bicycle instruction, and swimming lessons. Every policeman must not only swim, but must be able to rescue the drowning.

The instructors in evidence and court

look over the professional thieves arrested the day before.

At night the recruits were sent to busy precincts. Whenever a man on reserve or emergency duty went out on call, a rookie went with him, to watch his work and to help him. Every Saturday and Sunday night Kelly was sent out with a

sergeant, who showed him that a patrolman's superior officer has to work as hard as the patrolman himself.

Once a month the rookies would go out in pairs into the busiest streets for the purpose of observing violations of the law and conditions which they believed should be investigated. They made a report on these at the training-school.

THE NEW PATROLMAN

At last Kelly's three months were up, and at last he was able to make a public appearance in the blue uniform. This he had paid for with his own money, just as he had paid for his cap, his baton, and his revolver. His outfit cost him about one hundred and seventy dollars. The city gave him nothing, but loaned him a shield.

Even when fully equipped and assigned to a post, Kelly was not yet a full-fledged policeman. For the next six months he was under the eye of his precinct commander. At the end of that time the captain reported to the police commissioner that Kelly was a capable patrolman. The commissioner looked at the report on Kelly made by the commanding officer of the training-school. This important functionary also agreed that Kelly would do.

So, as the neighbors remarked, Joe Kelly was "on the cops" at last. They thought it had taken him a long while. Time was when a candidate, after two weeks' training, was swinging his club as jauntily as you please.

That is exactly what makes the difference between the old police system of New York and the new. The Kellys of old went out on their beats and learned

their police lessons, sometimes to somebody's grief. The Kellys of to-day have the lore and tradition of the department drummed into them before they are permitted to put on a uniform.

So there was Kelly. He was on the city pay-roll, and nothing could get him off it but death, disability, or dereliction. In five years he would get fourteen hundred dollars a year. At fifty-five he could retire on half-pay. Also, there was a chance to go ahead. In the eleven free promotion-schools of the department he knew that nearly one-fifth of the city's nine thousand patrolmen were studying to be sergeants. In another school were three-fourths of the eligible sergeants, studying to be lieutenants.

To be a captain at two thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars a year, or an inspector at thirty-five hundred dollars, was not beyond the possibilities for Kelly. Meanwhile, there was the traffic squad, if he chose, or the bicycle squad, or a place in the detective bureau, if he showed that he was fit for it. He had an equal chance with the others of the nine thousand to win a medal, or, in years to come, to ride like the chief inspector, Max Schmittberger, at the head of a police parade, his coat trimmed with velvet and gold ivy-leaves. The outlook had plumbing beaten to jelly.

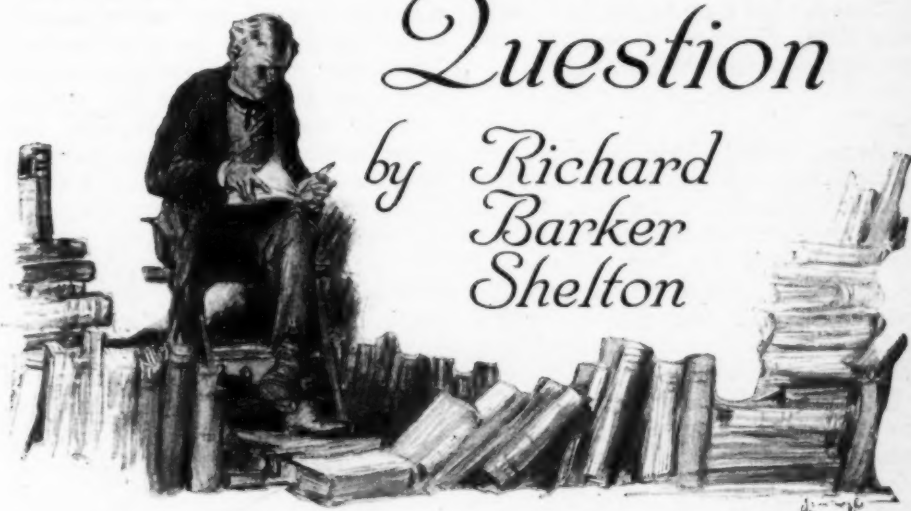
Chin in the air, uniform spotless, shoes polished, his face glowing with peaceful ambition, Kelly patrolled his beat "to the right, shield to the curb." The tin whistle of the peanut-stand at the corner screamed at him, but he seemed not to hear it. New York policemen do not take peanuts any more, except in the comic papers.

SUNSET AT SEA

Now o'er the west's sun-reddened steep
The clouds pile in a toppling heap,
And color all her unsparred urns
Riotously overturns;
Then, shaking starlight from her hair,
The night creeps soft up twilight's stair.

Harry Kemp

The Quest and the Question



by Richard
Barker
Shelton

Illustrated by George Wright

I HAVE four hundred and twenty-eight dollars of somebody else's money—and a conscience. That is why this story appears here. I want to return that money to its rightful owner—or my conscience dictates such a course, which amounts to the same thing in the end.

The unfortunate part of the affair lies in the fact that while I know the man to whom the money should go, I do not know his name, or where he is. I know that he is a stationer, presumably some small-town stationer. I know that he had a clerk—a small, pale, thin-faced, rather elderly clerk, named Andrew Bogle; and there my whole knowledge of the rightful owner of the four hundred and twenty-eight dollars ends.

No doubt you are thinking this matter belongs much more properly in some "Lost and Found" column, and perhaps you are right; but there are several drawbacks to acting upon such a suggestion.

For one thing, I couldn't go into detail in an advertisement; for another, it would have to appear in newspapers all over the United States, for I haven't the least idea from what part of the country Andrew Bogle may have come, or in what State is the stationery-store where he used to perch on a stool behind the counter and read the books from the little circulating library between customers.

Again, the wording of it would present difficulties. I dislike the thought of howling from the housetops for Andrew Bogle's former employer to come hither and get his four hundred and twenty-eight dollars. That would seem to cast aspersions on Andrew Bogle, and I am quite unwilling to do so without giving a full and sufficient explanation. So any "Lost and Found" column seems, all in all, entirely out of the question.

This magazine will fall into many hands and will be perused by many eyes. It will go hither and yon, from one end

of the country to the other, and it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that some one, somewhere, who reads these pages may have known Andrew Bogle and his former employer, the stationer.

That is what I am hoping, and that is why I am giving up a perfectly good winter day to write this tale.

II

AFTER several futile attempts, my friend, Andrew Bogle, had managed to get the window beside him open. He had been my friend for the length of time it takes a train on the Great Falls branch to run from Still River to Rockville, which is forty-seven minutes by the schedule and never less than fifty-two by any accurate timepiece.

It had been raining for the past few miles—one of those deluging summer showers. Now the rain had ceased as suddenly as it had come, and Bogle, close to the open window, took in deep breaths of the freshened air.

"I always like the smell of things after a rain," he explained. "Get any of it, do you? Good, ain't it?"

We were running at the moment through a stretch of white pines. The wet pungency of the trees was in grateful contrast to the muggy closeness of the earlier afternoon. I nodded, and expressed my complete approval of the open window.

Then I waited. I wanted Andrew Bogle to take up the thread of talk which the opening of the window had interrupted. For some time I had been aware that he was trying to tell me something; something very confidential I was sure it was to be, from his roundabout method of approaching it.

Then, too, all the way from Still River he had been sizing me up covertly when he thought I wasn't watching him. Momentarily the conversation, or, rather, his side of it, had taken on more and more intimate touches. I was sure that he was reaching the point where he would tell me something about himself—something that

he considered very vital; and, for some reason which I couldn't quite explain to myself, I wanted to hear it.

He was a meek, thin-faced, colorless sort of man. His gray suit, baggy and evidently having seen much service, seemed several sizes too large for him. I remember distinctly the way his vest rode up the back of the low, straight collar he wore. There were deep lines at his temples; and other lines, radiating from the corners of his mouth, gave his face a queer expression—part querulous, part wistfully eager.

In the rack above his head was a single piece of hand-luggage of ancient vintage, which he called his "valise." It had been on the floor at his feet at Still River when I had boarded the train there and stood beside him, making the usual politely vague inquiry as to the reservation of the other half of his seat. It being an unwieldy, bulging affair, which took up most of the floor-space of the seat, he had put it up in the rack. So short of stature was he that it was necessary for him to stand on the seat in order to reach the rack.

He had started talking almost as soon as I was on the cushions beside him. It was aimless talk, pointless talk, the usual observations about the weather and the heat and the sad need of rain.

I had replied briefly, and, I am afraid now as I look back on it, rather ungraciously; but this did not discourage his artless prattling in the least. In ten minutes I had learned his name, and that he was sixty-two. I was made aware—quite without any questioning on my part, you may be sure—that he was unmarried, worked in a stationery-store, and up to a year ago had supported his sister, Cassie, who had been a bedridden invalid. A description of the many floral pieces at Cassie's funeral occupied him from Franklin Mills to Seabury Center.

It was at this point that I became aware of the quiet manner in which he was sizing me up, and felt that his seemingly rambling conversation was ap-

proaching by roundabout methods some well-defined objective.

I am not partial to confidences. They are generally very trite and boring; so I do not know why I should have been at all eager to hear any such from the man

own impatience when the episode of getting the window open to sniff the breath of rain-wet pines threw him momentarily out of his stride.

My impatience, however, was not to endure for any length of time, it seemed.



"I'M GOING AWAY FOR A WHILE. I MAY COME BACK SOME TIME, AND I MAY NEVER COME BACK"

beside me. Perhaps something instinctive within me told me that they would be well worth while; or perhaps it was because I was amused by the artless ingenuousness of the shabby, eager little figure next the window. Anyway, I was surprised at my

He turned from the window with a slow, almost shy smile; and in that smile, half eager, half ashamed, I read many things—loneliness, trust, the determination to open his heart to me fully and completely.

"Say, did you ever have something

mighty interesting happen to you right out of a clear sky?" he asked, taking a tack which I had scarcely anticipated.

"Interesting?" I repeated. "Interesting? Why, I don't know. I suppose so. Interesting things are happening to us every day, only we haven't the eyes to see them in that light—"

"You don't quite get me," he interrupted me. "I mean something wholly out of the ordinary run of things. For instance, have you ever had some swell-looking woman that you didn't know, that you'd never so much as seen before, rush up to you, or beckon to you, or—or come and sit down beside you on a—on a—well, say a park bench, or at a table in some public place? Have you ever had a perfect stranger grab you by the arm and tell you not to look so blamed surprised, but to talk to him, quiet like, for a few minutes, as if you'd known him all your life? Did you ever have any one—any one"—he seemed to be delving among notes in some dusty mental archive—"follow you and watch you and spy on all your movements for some reason you couldn't guess? In short"—his face was close to mine, and his voice sank—"has an adventure ever come your way?"

I started to laugh; but I looked into his eyes and thought better of it.

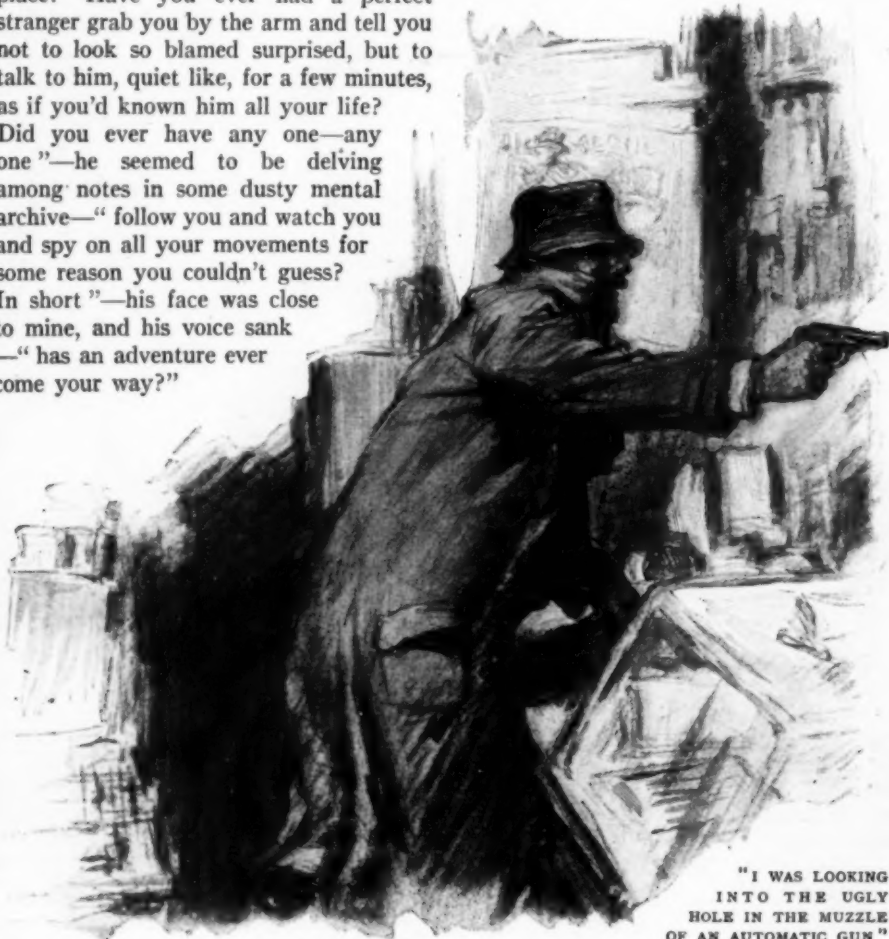
"Why, no," I said. "No, I can't say I have. Nor that I want one, for that matter," I added a moment later.

"Why not?" he shot at me so sharply that I was taken off my guard.

"Well, for one thing, I'm afraid it would prove disappointing."

"Don't say that! Don't tell *me* it would be disappointing," said the little man by the car window. "If I thought that way I wouldn't be here. I'm hot on the trail of an adventure myself."

I looked at him, and looked quickly away again. I didn't want him to see my lips twitching beyond my control. It was



"I WAS LOOKING INTO THE UGLY HOLE IN THE MUZZLE OF AN AUTOMATIC GUN"

next to impossible to imagine that meek, seedy figure, with the baggy clothes several sizes too large for it, in anything but the most ordinary setting.

"What sort of an adventure is it?" I asked at length, when my face was beginning to show hopeful symptoms of behaving itself.

The narrow shoulders wriggled in the faintest hint of a shrug.

"Search me!" said he. "I couldn't tell you. I'm just poking about, waiting for one to come my way. That's what you have to do—move about where adventures might be and wait, and—and—they come to you," he ended lamely, yet with seemingly unbounded optimism.



"Do you think the Great Falls branch propitious for them?" I asked.

"They come to you in the last places you'd ever think of looking for 'em," he declared oracularly. "There ain't any particular localities where you go for 'em, nor you can't go out and make 'em to order. I may go on to the end of the line, or I may get off at the next station, if it looks good to me."

III

I MUST have stared at him, for he evidently saw the need of further enlightening me. He faced me with a smile—one of those patient smiles that we are wont to use with a small and bewildered child.

"You see, I've worked all my life in that stationery-store I was speaking to you about a while back," he explained. "I was born in that town, and I went to work there when I was fifteen. I've been at it ever since—same old thing day in and day out, same old blank-books and rulers and pencils and magazines and fountain pens being called for every day. The most exciting thing that ever happened there was when the man that I first went to work for died and another man bought the place off his widdier.

"I couldn't leave or change or go anywhere else, for there was Cassie dependent on me. She was sick for years, and it took all I could rake and scrape for doctors and medicine to keep her even half comfortable. It didn't get to me so much for a long time; but when the new man took over the store he wa'n't so everlastingly fussy as my old boss had been. He was easier on me. Time and time again he said to me:

"'Andy, never mind dusting off them shelves all your spare time. It don't do much good. You can't never catch up with the dust in this place. Improve your mind, instead. Sit down somewhere and read. Help yourself to the magazines; there they are for you to grab; or take any of the new novels or whatever books out of the circulating library happen to strike your fancy.'

"So I got into the habit of reading between customers. I read and read; oh, I read a pile of those books! The ones I liked best was the ones where something unusual happened to somebody; where somebody'd have a real cracking big adventure. After a time I begun to long for some such things as were always happening in those books to happen to me. Then I got to thinking that some day something like that *might* happen to me. By and by it come across me that 'might' wa'n't enough; some time before I died something *must* happen. The feeling grew on me all the time. It got stronger and stronger after Cassie died."

We pulled into a little station. He paused long enough to look out of the window at the flat, uninspiring little town.

"One morning," he went on, "about ten days ago, I come out from behind the counter. A woman was waiting at the table where the magazines were laid in piles; but I didn't go there. Instead, I went and got my hat and put it on. Says I to the boss, who had trotted up to wait on the woman at the table where the magazines was:

"'I'm going away for a while. I may come back some time, and I may never come back.'"

"Then out I stalks, leaving him standing there in the middle of the floor, staring after me with his mouth wide open."

He began chuckling softly, apparently viewing a mental picture of the thoroughly astounded boss.

"And you haven't any doubt you'll find your—adventure?" I asked inanely.

"I had something over five hundred dollars with me when I set out," said he. "That ought to see me through. I'm going to move about in all sorts of places until I find what I'm after, or"—he caught his breath sharply—"the money is gone. But five hundred will go quite a ways if you watch it careful. It ought to be enough."

I didn't know just what to say, so I sat there, silent. The train had pulled away

from the little station, and we began to gather headway.

Bogle sat looking out of the window, smiling to himself as he watched the flat fields slip past. Evidently it occurred to him that I might not wholly approve of his confidences, for he turned to me at length.

"You'd have to work in that stationery store for forty-seven years, as I did, to get the whole of what I've been driving at," he said.

I was about to reply that I thought perhaps I understood it better than he imagined—when the thing happened.

I don't remember any bumping or jolting or preliminary swaying. There was merely the sickening sensation of some mysterious force lifting me out of my seat and hurling me against the seat-arm across the aisle. Then I was hurled back again, and a crashing roar, shot through with rasping tinklings, seemed to be trying to burst my ear-drums.

Dust-clouds and acrid cinders choked and blinded me. The opposite side of the car had mysteriously become its roof, and I was struggling to escape from under Bogle's heavy valise, which somehow had crawled upon my chest.

I managed to get it off, and stood up. Broken glass crunched and powdered beneath my feet. Blood was streaming into my eyes and down my coat. From the other end of the wrecked car came a single wild, wailing scream.

At my feet a patch of white slowly began to shape itself into a face—a thin face, a meek face, just now a sadly twisted face. I bent over it. Something heavy and unyielding to my best efforts to raise it was pinning Bogle down.

He looked up at me, and I remember that there wasn't the slightest trace of bewilderment or fear in his eyes. I pulled again, but just as vainly, at the thing pinning him down.

"No use! Can't get it off," he said quite calmly. "You'll have to get somebody to help, and some tools—a crowbar and an ax."



"I GRABBED UP THE BILLS AND SLAMMED THEM INTO A COPY OF 'ROSA'S MARRIAGE'!"

"How badly are you hurt?" I asked, bending closer to him.

"I guess my right leg's gone. It hurts pretty bad," said he. "And I feel mighty queer and prickly from just below my shoulders down. But say—say! This is *it*, ain't it? This is different enough for anybody. I couldn't ever 'a' thought of anything like this! Why, this is an adventure!"

Then he fainted.

I crawled over the twisted wrecks of what had been seats and heating-pipes and lighting-fixtures to the rear door. It was jammed hard, but I finally managed to clear away the jagged remnants of broken glass in its upper panel, and crawled through.

I shall not say anything of the sounds behind me. I don't want to remember them even now.

The last three cars had gone down the embankment. On the track was the rest of the train. The car just ahead of ours,

itself torn loose and thrown at right angles across the track, dangled its forward truck over the ditch into which we had plunged.

I fell upon a man with an ax in his hands, who was sliding down the gravel bank from the tracks above. He must have been one of the engine crew. I recall now his very grimy blue overalls. He followed me to the place where Bogle lay.

I helped as best I could until I saw that limp form lifted out. Then I went forward in the car to lend a hand there.

IV

WHEN the wrecking-train came booming up to us, there was nothing more for me to do. I found that the badly injured had been taken to a little white farmhouse across the fields. Thither I went, and discovered Bogle stretched on a cot in an immaculately clean little room which I judged to be the parlor.

He was fully conscious. As I came in

He whispered something to a doctor who was bending over him. The doctor nodded, beckoned me to the cot, and went out.

"That right leg *is* busted," said Bogle, as I came up to the cot, "and they tell me I'm pretty well rumped up inside. I don't believe I'm coming out of this. It don't matter now, though. Funny! Who'd ever 'a' thought of my adventure coming to me *that* way! There's one little thing I shall probably want you to do for me, if you will."

"Anything at all that I can do, I'll do only too gladly," I told him. "Just tell me what it is."

"Put your hand inside my shirt," he instructed me.

I did so.

"Find the strings and the bag at the end of 'em?"

I took out a little bag of gray flannel and held it before his eyes.

"Open it," said he.

I slipped the draw-strings. A wad of carefully folded bills disclosed itself.

"Count 'em," said Bogle. "Tell me what you make."

I ran the bills through my fingers slowly. I am not an adept at counting money.

"Four hundred and twenty-eight dollars," I told him.

"Then I ain't had to touch it," said he with a little sigh of relief. "I was sorter confused when they brought me in here. I couldn't seem to remember about it. I'd think first I hadn't used any of it, and then I was just as sure I had used some. That money belongs to my boss."

I presume my face mirrored my emotions of the moment, for he hurried on:

"I want it sent back to him. Would it be too much trouble to write when you send it, and sort of explain things? There was always as much as that, or more, in the safe; but I never even thought of touching any of it until—that night. Sit down here by me."

I drew a chair close to the cot. Bogle ran his tongue over his dry lips.

"You see, after Cassie died, there

wa'n't anything to keep me from going away," said he, "except that I didn't have money enough. Her sickness and all those doctors' bills and the funeral expenses had kept me awful close; but I squared 'em all up and had a little left—less 'n a hundred dollars, it was. I begun squeezing every cent that I could out of my pay to put with it, but it was dreadful slow work. Here I was getting along in years, and if I was going after that adventure, it was time I went; but I had to have some little money when I started out. I used to figure out when I'd have enough, and how old I'd be; and it sorter worried me. If I could 'a' put away the whole of my pay it wouldn't 'a' grown any too fast.

"That night—that particular night—it was raining hard. It was a Wednesday night. We always kept open till nine o'clock on Wednesday nights. The boss had gone home to supper, and I was all alone. It was too rainy to look for customers; so I got a book—it was one of the new ones, and a bully story—and I was reading.

"I'd just happened to look up when the man came in, or else I never should 'a' known he'd come in, he came so easy. He had on a long, brown rain-coat and a round soft hat with the brim turned down. The water was running in streams off his hat, and it was dripping off his beard, too."

Bogle stopped to catch his breath in a little gasp, and I noticed the shining wet beads all over his forehead.

"Never mind about it," I said soothingly. "Don't try to talk now. It's taking too much out of you."

He shook his head stubbornly, and the lines at the corners of his mouth stood out more sharply as he clenched his teeth.

"No, I want to tell you, and I wish you'd write the boss about it," he said. "The boss always used me white. Time and again he'd say to me:

"'Never mind that everlasting dusting, Andy. It don't get you anything, or me, either, as I see. Improve your mind in-

stead. There's the magazines and the new novels and the circulating library. Help yourself, and take things easy till somebody comes in.'

"Well, this man that came that Wednesday night—I'd never seen him before. He was a stranger—I'm sure of that. I knew practically every one in town. He came up to the glass case where we kept the fountain pens. I laid down my book and stepped behind that case. His cheeks were all glistening with the wet on 'em.

" 'I want a fountain pen,' says he; 'a cheap one, but one that ain't going to leak all over my pocket. Got one?'

"I stooped and pulled a tray of cheap pens out of the case. When I straightened up, I was looking into the ugly hole in the muzzle of an automatic gun.

" 'Now, feller, no monkeyin' with me!' he growls at me through his beard. 'Do as I tell you, and do it quick. First, drop that tray and cross your hands over your chest. Not that way—higher up!'

"I put down the tray and crossed my hands like he told me.

" 'There's a safe here,' says he. 'Lead me to it!'

"I led the way to the back of the store with my hands crossed on my chest, as he'd made me do.

" 'The door's open a crack, ain't it?' says he. 'Tain't even locked, so I sha'n't have to make you work the combination for me. Pull that door wider. Now open them drawers, and take out them bills. Now count 'em for me!'

"I did what he told me. There was four hundred and twenty-eight dollars in the lot.

" 'Lay 'em there on top of the safe,' says he, still keeping me covered with the gun.

"I'll admit that up to that minute I'd been scared half out of my senses. My knees seemed like they were going to give out under me and let me down any minute. The pit of my stomach was all of a tremble, and there were funny, crawling chills chasing up and down my spine. Oh,

I was scared, all right, till I saw his hand—the one that didn't have the gun in it—clawing out for those bills.

"It wa'n't because it was the boss's money he was taking that made me see red all at once. That wa'n't it at all. It come over me like a flash what four hundred and twenty-eight dollars would do for a man—the adventures he might start out for if he had that much money. It made me wild to see any one getting it so easy!

"There was a two-quart bottle of ink, part full, on top of the safe. I don't know how I ever had the nerve to do it; but all of a sudden I knew the shaking in my knees wa'n't because I was scared, but because I was mad. I made a grab for that bottle of ink, and I up with it, high as I could swing it, and brought it down on his head. It busted to flinders, and his face turned black with the ink running down it. He staggered, and I saw the hand with the gun in it fumbling along the edge of the safe as he tried to steady himself and shake the ink out of his eyes. So I jabbed the jagged neck of the bottle into that hand as hard as I could—not once, but I kept on doing it till he'd dropped the gun and I'd kicked it under the counter.

"Then I jumped to the shelf where we kept the inks and grabbed down another bottle. I suppose all the while I was yelling blue murder at the top of my voice, though I never knew it. Anyway, he turned and went running, all doubled up, to the front door, and out into the rain and down the street; and I heard people coming—from the pool-room across the square, and from the drug-store on the corner.

"They were just opening the door—the people from the pool-room and the two clerks from the drug-store—when the scheme popped into my head. It was such slow work trying to save up money out of my pay, you see; and I was sixty-two. I grabbed up the bills on top of the safe and slammed them into a copy of 'Rosa's Marriage'—third book from the

end on the shelf where we kept the new novels.

"The people came flocking in. They'd seen the man running off through the rain. There was his gun under the counter, and the ink spattered all round where I'd busted the bottle on him. Besides, there'd recently been a regular epidemic of hold-ups in the surrounding towns.

"Two weeks later, when I walked out and told the boss I was leaving, that particular copy of 'Rosa's Marriage' was under my coat!"

V

I SAT there, staring speechlessly at the man on the cot. I saw the stationer's-shop, the rain, the man with his cheeks glistening wetly. I saw the robber's hand going out for the package of bills.

And Andrew Bogle—little, meek, thin-faced Andrew Bogle, who was so short that he had to stand on the car-seat to get his valise into the rack—had swung an ink-bottle on the intruder's head and jabbed his gun-hand with what was left of the neck of it, and thus, single-handed, had disarmed him and put him to ignominious and ink-blinded flight. Then he had concealed the four hundred and twenty-eight rescued dollars, in order that

adventure might some time turn her face to him and smile!

I thought of the pearls and the swine, and an overpowering desire to laugh long and loudly took possession of me; but, before the laughter could start, something was choking in my throat and making my eyes untrustworthy.

I reached into my pocket for my pen and an old envelope that happened to be there.

"And the name and the address this money is to go to?" I suggested.

There was no answer.

I repeated my question, and as I did so I looked at Bogle. He was smiling, as a man might smile to whom life has given what he asked of it. The eyes were open; but they looked beyond me—beyond the rose-garlanded wall-paper of the clean little room—beyond everything earthly.

So, if any of you who read this happen to know a stationer—a stationer in some small town—who has lost four hundred and twenty-eight dollars, and who until recently employed a meek, shabby, elderly clerk named Andrew Bogle, kindly communicate at once with me, in care of this magazine. I want to send him back his money, and to write him a line or two anent that former clerk of his.

MAN OR MANIKIN

No matter whence you came, from a palace or a ditch,
You're a man, man, man, if you square yourself to life;
And no matter what you say, hermit-poor or Midas-rich,
You are nothing but a husk if you sidestep strife.

For it's do, do, do, with a purpose all your own,
That makes a man a man, whether born a serf or king;
And it's loaf, loaf, loaf, lolling on a beach or throne,
That makes a being thewed to act a limp and useless thing!

No matter what you do, miracles or fruitless deeds,
You're a man, man, man, if you do them with a will;
And no matter how you loaf, cursing wealth or mumbling creeds,
You are nothing but a noise, and its weight is nil.

For it's be, be, be, champion of your heart and soul,
That makes a man a man, whether reared in silk or rags;
And it's talk, talk, talk, from a tattered shirt or stole,
That makes the image of a god a manikin that brags!

Richard Butler Glaesner

Children of Passion^{*}



by Mary Imlay Taylor

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED

CONVICTED, on circumstantial evidence, of the murder of his friend Ballard, George Barhyte has been sentenced to die, and the Governor of the State, William Nicholson, refuses to pardon him. Both Barhyte and Ballard were childhood friends of the Governor's young wife, Hester Nicholson, who earnestly but vainly intercedes with her husband; nor will Nicholson listen to a petition presented by Senator Curwood on behalf of the condemned man.

Another close friend and comrade of Barhyte is Leonard Nicholson, half-brother to the Governor. He is loved by Laura Warren, whose grandmother, the widow of a distinguished judge, is one of the important personages of the State capital. Laura is jealous of Hester Nicholson, believing that her beauty has fascinated Leonard and prevented him from reciprocating Laura's own love for him. Leonard, on his part, suspects that Hester cares for Barhyte, and when, with much emotion, she appeals to him to plead for the prisoner with her husband, for her sake, he decides upon a belated action of justice and self-sacrifice. Going to the Governor, he confesses that it was he, and not Barhyte, who killed Ballard.

Before Governor Nicholson can deliver Leonard into the hands of the law, Hester, overcome by emotional pity, spirits the young man away and enables him to escape to Canada. The Governor's political enemies seize the opportunity to charge him with contriving the disappearance of the self-confessed murderer; and as he will not exculpate himself by revealing his wife's complicity, he resigns the Governorship.

Barhyte, released from the death-house, meets Hester in the street, and alarms her by showing fierce anger against Leonard Nicholson, and a keen desire to exact vengeance for the suffering and disgrace that he has unjustly endured.

XVII

ON her way back to the executive mansion Hester saw no one whom she recognized until, at the last crossing, she met Mrs. Warren. The old lady went out on foot so seldom that the Governor's wife was taken by surprise and colored under the thin veil she wore. Would Laura's grandmother, like Laura, accuse her?

But Mrs. Warren met her with eager sympathy.

"My dear, my dear! I'm going to your house this minute. You know how

I love you both!" She looked up wistfully at Hester. "Do you think he'll see me?"

"The Governor?" Almost unconsciously Hester shrank from the more intimate name. "I know he will — if he's at home. He's not at home a great deal now," she added, coloring again under the old woman's eyes. "There's been so much" — she hesitated — "so much to do."

Mrs. Warren gave her a gentle look. She wondered if Hester knew, if she half understood all that had happened, all that it meant to Nicholson!

* Copyright, 1916, by Mary Imlay Taylor—This story began in the June number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

"I want to see him, my dear. You see, I've always known him. When he was a little lad he used to come and sit on my piazza and talk to me; we were great chums. And now—Hester, you know how we all believe in him!"

Hester looked at the old lady strangely; she began to feel something behind Mrs. Warren's trepidation. Her own lips quivered. Turning, she caught a group on the corner leveling a camera upon her. She seized Mrs. Warren's hand.

"Come!" she exclaimed hurriedly. "We mustn't stand here! They treat me like an exhibit now—there are the camera-fiends!"

"How shameful!" The old lady hurried along, panting and using her cane. "My dear, they'll get me! I can't run—and I've got on my last year's bonnet!"

In spite of herself, Hester laughed. Mrs. Warren's disregard for the fashions was flagrant; she frequently wore a bonnet as severe as an old-time Quakeress.

At the door of the Governor's house they had to pass through a little crowd of curiosity-seekers. Hester was calm, but a slight blush went up to her hair. She looked neither to the right nor to the left, and when the door opened she went in proudly. Young Ashmead was in the hall, and she spoke to him.

"Is the Governor at home yet?"

The secretary reddened, avoiding her eye.

"He's alone in the library now, Mrs. Nicholson," he replied quietly.

Hester took Mrs. Warren's hand in hers again.

"Come, you can go in to see him. He'll be glad, I know."

"And you?" The older woman looked up at her sharply.

"I'm going up-stairs. Come and take tea with me afterward."

Mrs. Warren looked at her for a moment, hesitated, and then, disregarding Ashmead's presence, she reached up on tiptoe and kissed Hester's flushed cheek.

"God keep you, my dear!" she said softly and went through the open library door.

Hester, with her foot on the lowest step, saw the little old figure against the ruddy background of the familiar room, and beyond her the tall figure of her husband rising suddenly from his desk. She caught the pallor of his face, the slight stoop of his wide shoulders. He looked ten years older, heavily burdened. She drew a sharp breath and went on up-stairs into the little sitting-room where she had urged Leonard to save Barhyte. How long ago it seemed, measured by the agony through which she had passed! It was eons since that day; yet the room looked the same, and mocked her with its familiarity. A bright fire burned on the hearth; a servant had set out her little tea-table. The curtains were drawn across the window, and a mellow light shone from the shaded candelabra.

She laid aside her wraps, and, taking off her hat, sat down beside the fire. She felt chilled and desolate. Even a word from Leonard would have comforted her; yet it was not of Leonard that she thought, but of her husband's face as she had seen it when he rose to greet his visitor.

The change in his countenance was so great that his wife could not disguise it, even to herself. He had been passing through a terrible climax in his life, and he had shut her out. Strangers came to express their sympathy, but he asked none of her.

She shivered. A horrible sensation of loss, of isolation, swept over her young soul and bared it to misery. She looked about her hopelessly, and her eye fell on a half-sheet of a newspaper—the extra that she had heard them calling. It had fallen unread upon the table. She took it up and began to examine it, terribly awake at last to the situation.

It was nearly an hour later when William Nicholson came slowly up-stairs. He had been touched by old Mrs. Warren's visit, and, for the moment, his

mood was softened. He had even gone with the old lady to the door and stood there, to be sure that she was safe in his motor-car for her homeward journey. Then he had turned, almost reluctantly, to face his wife.

He must face her, and he shrank from the thought of her youth and loveliness exposed to the storm that had broken on his head. That she had done so much to make it worse was no reason why she should suffer. He was too generous, too high-minded, to retain a shadow of resentment, but he was convinced that she loved his half-brother. If she did not, she surely would not have dared so much, risked her good name and ruined her husband, to save Leonard. She loved him—that was certain!

It was only natural, too. In his dull misery, the Governor told himself that it was very natural. Leonard was near her own age, handsome, gifted with that winning quality which draws women. He had the record of long and intimate friendship. He had played with Hester when they were children, while he, the Governor, older, more worn and hardened by his disciplined life, was merely the husband whom her father had chosen for her.

She had been only too ready with sympathy and aid for his brother, but for him, in his hour of need, she had given no sign. William Nicholson was patient, but he was human, and he shut his heart against her. Yet now he must speak to her, must tell her the worst if she asked it. She had an inalienable right to know. He came slowly into the room and found her still sitting by the fire.

"Mrs. Warren sent you her love, Hester," he said quietly; "but she went home at once."

His wife did not answer him; she did not seem to hear what he said about Mrs. Warren. She rose, went slowly to the tea-table, and began to pour out a cup of tea mechanically, her hands firm.

"You look tired," she said kindly. "Let me give you a cup of tea."

He took it, tasted it, and set it down on the table. She bent over, picked up a piece of newspaper from the floor, and handed it to him.

"There's an article about you," she said slowly. "It says that you have resigned. Is that true?"

He put the paper aside.

"Yes; I resigned this morning."

There was a sharp pause. She heard the clock on the mantel ticking tumultuously, but she was sure that her heart stood still. Her first impulse was one of deep indignation that he had not told her.

William Nicholson averted his face, aware that she had a right to feel that she had been slighted.

"I should have told you before," he admitted slowly; "but—you seemed preoccupied."

"I had a right to be told!"

"I supposed that you must know."

"How could I know?" Her voice had a strange sound. "Will you tell me, please—has this anything to do with Leonard?"

"Of course! I had to resign. You know Barhyte has a host of friends, and so had Ballard. It's over; we shall have to go down to the country next week. The Lieutenant-Governor was sworn in to-day." As he spoke he rose from his seat and stood looking at her. "Can you be ready to go next week?"

For a moment she could not speak. Then she forced herself.

"Of course! It—oh, it's the wreck of your life, isn't it?"

"Let us forget that. I—"

He threw out his hands with a poignant gesture and turned to leave the room. Hester rose to her feet. She started toward him, her heart in her eyes; but he never looked back. He went out and shut the door.

XVIII

THE departure from the Governor's house was as swift as it was unexpected. After that brief scene with her husband,

Hester asked no more questions. She packed with feverish haste. She tried not to think, not even to plan for the future. She shut her ears, and tried to shut her mind, to all things outside of those four walls.

The servants helped her with almost a reflection of her eagerness, and presently the place was so dismantled that it lost the warm, familiar look that wrung her heart. Footsteps and voices echoed in bare rooms and empty corridors. Hester shrank from the sight of the little sitting-room where Leonard had left her, at her bidding, and where her husband had shut the door of his heart against her. She could not ask for comfort or seek sympathy. She could only close her lips upon it and go on, all her stormy nature keyed and tense under the strain.

In less than a week they had sent their personal belongings down into the country and formally surrendered the house to the new Governor. Hester did not stay to greet him, but one cold day in December she went down in the motor to the old country house that had belonged to the Nicholsons for four generations.

It was here that Leonard, Ballard, and Barhyte had quarreled, and not a hundred yards away, in the little wood, that Ballard had been found dead. Hester shrank from the thought of it, but nothing would have induced her to tell her husband that she could not go there. It was, indeed, one of those things that she had to do, and she did it with so much composure, with so little sign of feeling, that Nicholson thought her indifferent, when he had feared that she would suffer.

He was suffering himself. The humiliation of his position was very great. He had been forced to take the blame of Leonard's escape upon himself, for he had been unable to explain it, to make any point clear, without betraying Hester. His silence and his omissions had all been counted against him. Not only the Legislature, already none too

friendly, blamed him, but the people at large.

He had resigned in the thick of it. Just at the moment when every instinct of his nature clamored to stand firm, he had bowed before the storm and resigned. It had been the bitterest moment of his life, and his wife had been absorbed, as he thought, in her grief for Leonard.

Like Hester herself, Nicholson shut his heart and faced it alone. It was tragic enough to go back to the old house, the house of his father, and feel that Leonard had disgraced them all. It was bleak enough to face the tumult of abuse that was being hurled at him by his political opponents. He had not the heart to probe his wife's indifference again.

Hester had preceded him into the country. He had been forced to be the last to leave, to give up the house to his successor, to meet the last ordeals and sign the last documents. It was in the gray of the winter morning when he came home. He did not disturb Hester, and they met for the first time at breakfast.

He found her waiting for him, a little pale, a little fragile—a young, slender thing she seemed to him. She wore a clinging house-gown of some warm, soft shade that became her. The house was an old-fashioned one, with a wide central hall, and as he crossed it he saw her standing by the breakfast-table with a letter in her hand. An impulse to go to her and gather her in his arms, to tell her how sorry he was that she had had to endure so much, even to ask for a little sympathy, was chilled by the sight of her face. She was reading the letter, a little flush on her cheeks, and her lips quivered. At the sound of his footsteps she quickly thrust the paper behind her.

"You're late!" she exclaimed, with an evident effort to be commonplace, but with a tremulous note in her voice. "Shall I send for more hot coffee?"

He shook his head, taking his place soberly. He knew that she had hidden

a letter, thinking that he had not seen it. His heart sank. Leonard was writing to her, and they were hunting Leonard everywhere. Would they find her letters to him?

Hanson set his breakfast before him. He saw Hester's face opposite in her accustomed place; but in its fragile beauty it had an aloofness, a mystery, that made him feel the vagueness of their spiritual relation. He did not speak, and there was a kind of reluctant silence until Hanson left the room on some household errand.

Nicholson, trying to eat, was thinking of the last scene in the Legislature, of Curwood's fat, heated face, and the new Governor taking the oath. Then he was aware of her voice.

"Will you tell me—can you tell me—just what they're doing? Where are they looking for Leonard now?"

"Everywhere." He hesitated, and then added: "If they take him, they'll search all his belongings, his luggage, his letters. He has no money, and he never cared to work. They'll find him!"

Her hand on the table trembled so much that she withdrew it, hiding it in her lap. She knew that he had seen the letter and was warning her. The hot blood rose in her pale cheeks.

"It will be dreadful if they find him!"

Nicholson assented gravely, without looking up.

"If—if you had kept your place as Governor, wouldn't it have kept them in check—the very fact that you were Governor?"

"It only made them worse."

"Do you think Leonard really did it? Barhyte is so bitter, so cruel! Don't you think Leonard confessed to—to shield Barhyte?"

"Why should he?"

She rose from the table and went over to the window. Standing there, looking out, she answered him.

"I asked him to save Barhyte."

There was a brief silence. In it Nich-

olson struggled to maintain his composure; it seemed certain to him now that she loved Leonard.

"And that troubles you?"

His voice was kind. She looked around at him, white and tremulous, ready to cry.

"Yes!"

"Then dismiss it from your mind. I know he killed Ballard. He gave me proof enough. I demanded proof, for I didn't want to believe it. They quarreled—" He hesitated, and then said frankly: "They quarreled over a woman."

"Yes, I know!"

He turned and looked at her searchingly. Something in her tone suggested that she thought she was the woman. Nicholson's face whitened to the lips. He gathered up some papers and was going to leave the room. She ran after him, laying her hand on his arm.

"You say they'll surely find him," she whispered, looking over her shoulder toward the pantry door. "Do you think they've any idea now? Couldn't he be in South America?"

Her husband turned and looked into her face; its subtle charm, its sweetness, were not even eclipsed by its misery.

"Do you know?" he asked her gently.

Her eyes wavered, and he felt her hand on his arm tremble. He took it gently, and, disengaging himself, opened the door.

"Don't tell me," he said, and went out.

Hester stood there, trembling. She had meant to tell her husband, and to ask how to send money safely to Leonard. He had written to her that morning, and he was not in South America. She was in a panic lest they should find him, he was so near. But his brother did not want to know!

She stood where William had left her, trying to think, trying to see a way to help Leonard. She remembered what he said at the junction—that it was because of her that he had killed Ballard. She

knew what Nicholson did not—that the murdered man had been in love with her, and that she had broken off a school-girl engagement with him before she married the Governor. She could imagine that Ballard had said angry things against her, and Leonard had killed him in defense of her good name. The thing that perplexed her was the manner of his death. Why had Leonard shot an unarmed man? Yet she must try to get money to him; there was no other way for him to get any now.

She was still trying to find an answer to her problem, a way to get help to Leonard, when she heard the outer door open and close, and steps sounded in the hall. Some one was coming!

She, who used to be so light-hearted, had lately acquired the habit of starting and trembling. She was trembling when Laura opened the door; but the sight of the girl's tense face and her blue eyes steadied Hester. She put out her hand.

"I'm glad you've come, Laura!"

Her voice was firmer now. She did not feel so utterly alone. Laura was more afraid than she was.

"I came because I couldn't help it!" Laura's face flushed painfully. "I said hateful things to you, Hester, and I—I'm so sorry about the Governor!"

"He's not the Governor now."

"He will always seem the Governor to me. I think it was fine—what he did!"

Hester did not understand; her mind was full of the horror of Leonard's possible capture. She drew Laura along with her.

"Come up-stairs. I've something to tell you."

The girl divined what it was, and her eyes dilated. She followed Hester, panting, for they ran up-stairs together. In her own room Hester shut the door.

"Laura, I've got a letter!"

"From Leonard?"

"Yes." Hester went to the other door, opening into her husband's room, and locked it. "He's in Canada. He didn't

get to the sea in time. He's afraid to sail for Argentina now, and—he has no money!"

Laura sat down weakly in an old-fashioned, high-backed chair. Her pretty face, with its engulfing hat, looked small and pale.

"May I see the letter, Hester?"

Hester blushed. In that letter Leonard had said things. Not openly, but covertly, he had hinted at his passion and despair. Laura must not see it!

"It—isn't meant to show," she said slowly. "It doesn't matter—it's only the money now. I've got to send it—I've got to send it right away. He's desperate!"

The girl eyed her, white-lipped.

"Do you mean he's—he's likely to kill himself?"

Hester nodded.

"I—I was afraid to tell his brother. You know how he feels."

Laura's hands trembled; she looked fixedly at Hester.

"Where is he? Tell me! I want to help, if I can."

Hester laid her finger on her lips. Then she took out the envelope of Leonard's letter. On it was his handwriting, queer and angular and undisguised. Hester wrote the address on it.

Laura took it and read it slowly, folding it and slipping it into her glove.

"He hasn't any money," Hester said, "and the detectives are hunting him. I'm going to send money, but I'm so afraid my letters are watched!"

The other girl still observed her. She was deeply agitated, but she never withdrew her eyes from Hester's face.

"You say—he might kill himself. Does he say so?"

"Yes, but—why, Laura, I can't believe it! You know how full of life he was, how he loved life!"

"He's written to you, and you're going to send him money?"

"Yes, if I can—"

"And nothing else? That is all you mean to do?"

"What else can I do?"

Laura rose from her chair. Her small, slight figure seemed to grow taller.

"I can do more, I think! He's alone now—deserted, penniless, and you can only send him money!"

"I'll do all I can—but, oh, Laura, how could he do it?"

"I don't ask that!" said Laura passionately. "I don't think of it. He's deserted, hunted—I'm going to do my best for him. He shall not need money!"

Hester turned, startled. A sudden intuition warned her. She caught at the girl's frock.

"Laura, what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to him!" Laura cried.

"I'm going to save him—if I can!"

She opened the door into the hall.

"Laura, you can't—you mustn't!"

Hester ran after her. "Laura—"

She stopped. Her husband was in the hall, and Laura was speaking to him with forced lightness.

"I came to see Hester, and—and I'm going now!"

"So soon?" Nicholson did not seem to see his wife's agitated face. He turned courteously. "I'll go down with you. I saw your carriage when you came."

Laura looked over her shoulder.

"Good-by, Hester! I'll do your errand for you."

Hester did not answer. She met her husband's quick look back at her, and smiled. She could not believe that Laura meant it; she watched her go, and comforted herself with that thought. How could a girl like Laura do such a thing? It was not as if Leonard loved her; he did not now, if he ever had.

But, in spite of all her anxiety for Leonard, and her crushing fear that he would be captured, Hester was not thinking of him, but of her husband's face on the stairs. It had a stricken look. How hard it must have been for him to resign! His career, his ambition, had been passions with him. She tried to plan a way to send money to Leonard, but her

husband's eyes seemed to look up at her out of every written page.

XIX

WEEKS of security had lulled Leonard's fears, and, forced to hide in first one small Canadian village and then another, he was simply bored. Time hung so heavy on his habitually idle hands that even the excitement of being pursued seemed, by comparison, delightful.

He smoked endless cigarettes and walked about the streets looking for some diversion. Finally he discovered a small naphtha-launch under its winter cover, and used some of the little money he had left to get it launched on the wintry waters. After that he spent much time taking risky trips in the small craft, daring the strong currents of some rapids below the town.

That he came back alive, and with the boat in good shape, raised him considerably in the estimation of the fishermen. If he was a fool, they argued, he was a mighty clever hand with a boat, and he was free with money. They reaped a harvest selling him small commodities at top prices, after the fashion of rural communities when the unwary stranger is marooned on their hospitable shores.

All these things merely increased Leonard's *ennui*. He did not allow himself to think of Ballard. Before this the dead man's face had haunted him, but his action in giving up everything to save Barhyte seemed to wipe the score out of his mind.

He felt, too, that the circumstances of Ballard's death were not really so black as they seemed. He could never prove anything to alleviate them, but there had been a quarrel, he had drawn the pistol in Ballard's face, and that young man had turned to reach for a stick to disarm him, when Leonard fired too quickly to be struck, and the ball hit the victim in the back. He had not deliberately stalked Ballard and shot him from behind.

He had snatched up Barhyte's too convenient pistol and slipped it into his

pocket because Ballard had sworn that he would kill him—Leonard—that day, like a rat, if he caught him. All three young men had been beside themselves with anger, and Leonard had really been overcome with horror when Ballard fell dead.

Then a chain of circumstances had thrown the suspicion on Barhyte, and Leonard had merely kept silence until the eleventh hour. His rescue of Barhyte was heroic, as he regarded it. It had meant ruin and probable death for himself; so he felt as if he had expiated his sins, and let Ballard drop out of his mind.

He had spent much idle time in writing his letter to Hester. Her beauty and charm, and her unhappiness with his grave, judicial brother, had wrought on Leonard until he fancied himself deeply in love with her. He had written a letter that might have touched a stone.

Then, lighting a cigarette, he went out to walk and wait for her answer, and for the money she would be sure to send. He was already in debt, and there would be trouble unless he got speedy relief.

It was characteristic of him that, stranded as he was, he went to the best hotel in the vicinity to get his meals. It was a large place for so small a town. There was a cabaret there in summer, and even now, when the rivermen came in, and the French Canadians, there was music.

It was very late when he pushed his way in and took his place at a small table in the far corner. There were several Frenchmen dining at a table in the center, and a few miscellaneous travelers had stopped on their way to Montreal. Most of them were smoking, and a young Canadian played on the piano. Leonard sat down and picked up a newspaper that lay on a near-by chair. It was from Detroit, and it spoke of the long search for Nicholson, the murderer of Ballard.

On another page Leonard read of his brother's resignation. It was a shock to him. In an instant he saw the bearings of the case, saw that his confession had ruined the Governor. Between the lines, he read the meaning of Nicholson's si-

lence. He had let the public think that he, and not Hester, had released Leonard.

The splendid fortitude of this, the giving up of everything to shield a young wife, touched the younger Nicholson for the first time. He drew a deep breath and dropped the paper. How fine William was at times! Compared with himself, how intolerably fine! And yet Hester did not love her husband, poor little goose!

Leonard was moved to pity. However great Hester's charm, she could not hold his fickle nature long. He felt a little compunction, a little pity—she had provoked her fate, yet he was not sure that she loved him. Even in that wild time when he knelt at her feet in the motor, there had been moments when she had seemed very far away, as remote and chilled as a stranger, not like Laura.

At this last thought he smiled. He had a convincing consciousness of Laura's infatuation.

Then, suddenly, the constant hum of conversation was interrupted by a new sound. The young man at the piano began to play a tune, and a woman's voice took up the refrain. It was a foreign voice, distinctly French, with a light, fine tone and a mirthful, mocking cadence. Leonard, whose ear was always trained for the voices of women, caught the accent, the peculiar charm of it, and started.

His *ennui* disappeared; he turned in his chair and, resting his chin in his hand, listened.

The singer was giving a French ballad, daring and popular, but not altogether elegant. However, it made a direct appeal to her auditors, and they applauded loudly with every verse. Thoroughly enjoying the little ripple of excitement she had caused, she turned and faced them, her hand on her hip and her chin up, while her full, white throat undulated with song like a plump canary's.

She was a small woman, with pretty arms and neck, white teeth, and deep, black eyes. Her dress, a flimsy affair of white and gold and spangles, clung to a form that defied criticism. She sang

gaily, as if she enjoyed it, laughing back at those who laughed at her. When some stranger tossed her a flower, she fastened it daintily in her black hair.

There was an encore, and she sang another song, and then another, until at last, tired and flushed, she curtsied, stepped down from the platform, avoided two invitations to drink at crowded tables, and made her way straight to the little table in the corner. Here she dropped into a seat opposite Leonard, and, resting her plump elbows on the table, dropped her chin into her encircling palms.

"*Mon Dieu!*" she said. "To think of finding you here, *mon ami!*"

XX

LEONARD looked at her a moment, considering, and then he remembered. She had been the little French waitress, Alice Mentir, in a near-by restaurant when he was at college. He had often tipped her, and one night he had taken her out to a barn-dance, just for fun. She was so pretty that everybody thought she had an invitation, until Ballard found her and told the story as a joke.

After that the hostess had left Leonard off her list. But what a trump the girl had been!

"How in the world did you light here, *mademoiselle?*" he asked lightly, handing her his cigarette-case. "Have some wine? There's no champagne at this beastly hole. Tell me all about it!"

"How did I come here? Why, to see you," she cooed.

Leonard laughed outright, lighting his cigarette. She tossed her head.

"*C'est vrai, c'est absolument vrai!*" she protested, twisting her cigarette between her fingers, her black eyes fixed upon his face.

He began to smoke, treating her with good-humored tolerance.

"How did you know I was here? It hasn't been announced, and"—he touched her hand lightly with the tip of his little finger—"I'm not called by my old name here, my dear!"

She lifted her eyebrows.

"Eh? Oh, I know! Why shouldn't I? I read the papers, *monsieur l'inconnu!*"

He had forgotten, for the moment, the publicity of his case, but her look recalled it. He continued to smoke, thinking rapidly. She was pretty and great fun, but he had not treated her well when he was a college boy, and he felt sure that she was a bit of a cat. Could he trust her?

Evidently she had some such doubts of him, too, for she lit her cigarette and smoked daintily, eyeing him. She noted the shadows under his eyes, the fagged look about his mouth, and the absence of those extravagances of toilet that she had always seen him affect. Short of funds, she decided shrewdly—hiding, and intensely bored!

What was it they offered for his arrest? A thousand dollars? *Pouf!* Very little when one thought of the shabbiness of it—if he behaved well. She had lost her heart to him once, and even now, if he should be himself again, she was not sure she could resist that captivating smile.

She had once intended to marry him and amaze the world. Now she was not sure that he was worth marrying—but how *distingué* he looked!

"Well, my dear, what have you been doing with yourself?" he asked again, filling her glass with wine. "I see you're as pretty as ever."

She lifted the glass to her lips and sipped a little, her eyes glowing under their drooping lashes.

"Oh, I've been singing! You didn't know I had a voice? Eh, but I leave! I was trained in Paris, but"—she shrugged a shoulder—"one can't be heard in this country if one is poor, so I sing at cabarets, and dance."

"You used to be an incomparable little waitress."

"*Pouf!* Who would be a waitress when there was anything else to do? It doesn't pay, *mon ami!*"

He laughed maliciously.

"I thought you made it pay. We used to give you outrageous tips!"

She flashed an angry glance at him.

"You don't let one forget old times!"

"Were they so bad?" he asked lazily, his air of fine indifference and patronage offending her more and more.

"You didn't make them good," she flashed at him. "*Mon Dieu*, how you hurt my feelings!"

He laughed provokingly.

"My dear little Alice, you never had any feelings. You were a cruel little butterfly yourself, and it isn't my fault if you singed your wings!"

"Oh, isn't it, *monsieur*? You love to torment, you're vain, you're hard, you're"—she leaned forward daringly—"you're wicked. You've killed your man, *chéri*!"

"Sh!" He started slightly, frowning. "Don't talk nonsense. You had no cause to love him, either."

"I? O-o-oh!"

She set her white teeth on her lip, her face aflame with passion. Leonard threw away his cigarette and sat regarding her in silence. He had never seen this mad fury in her before. She must have remembered the end of that mad frolic when Ballard had called her "the little servant."

After a moment, however, she dropped her hands into her lap, twisting them together, and her face relaxed into a smile.

"I would have liked to help kill him!" she said, very low. "To kill him, kill him—*ciel*, yes!"

Leonard frowned at her.

"For Heaven's sake, keep your tongue and your temper!" he exclaimed in an undertone. "Do you think I want to discuss the whole dreadful thing here? It's bad enough without that!"

"Ah, I see!" She sank back in her chair with a shrug. "You're sorry, and you're frightened!"

"Confound it, hush!" he whispered. "The people over there are listening. Take another cigarette, and keep quiet. You're prettier when you don't talk."

Her lip curled.

"*Merci du compliment!* Give me a light, *cher ami*. How salt the air smells to-night! Don't you wish you were at sea, eh?"

"I wish I were—or in South America!"

She laughed provokingly, leaning back and smoking while she watched him keenly.

"They think you're in California," she said lightly, "*en route* to Mexico."

"I see you read the newspapers!"

"Why not, *monsieur*? Have you ever been in Mexico? *Non*? That's bad, *mon ami*, for the climate is good, and the fruit—ah!" She rolled up her eyes. "You've no idea—here! I myself don't like Canada—it's too cold, too *triste*! Now, if one could go to Mexico—"

"And fight?" suggested Leonard, his ill temper passing away and his usual lazy good humor smoothing his face. He was drinking heavily, too, and she saw that his hand was unsteady. "I prefer Argentina—Buenos Aires."

She tossed her head.

"As you will! Here's a telegram for you, *monsieur*."

He started slightly and turned. A messenger-boy handed him a book to sign, and two yellow envelopes. Leonard opened the first message and read it with relief. It was from Hester, and said—in a language that he understood—that she had sent money, all she could. He drew a long sigh. He had been almost at his last dollar, and the thought of money was joy.

Rising hastily, he went to the little woman at the desk, to order more wine and cigarettes. He was in debt, but could assure her now of speedy payment. She liked his handsome face and the soft tones of his voice, and she smiled back at him. Of course, *monsieur* could have the wine and the cigarettes, and, yes, to-morrow there would be a little champagne—not much, but some. He rested his elbow on her desk and smiled indolently. He knew just what to do to bring the color to her cheek and the sparkle to her eye.

Behind him, little Mlle. Mentir looked

on with a scornful curl to her lip. So—he was at it everywhere, heartless, vapid, cruel!

Looking down, she saw the unopened telegram on the table. She slipped it deftly into her belt; then she leaned back in her chair and waited for the wine and cigarettes.

Afterward, when Leonard came back to the table, he looked around with a vaguely puzzled air. Clouded as his brain was with liquor, he could not clearly remember, but he thought there had been two despatches. He began to move the glasses about, and Alice saw it. She lifted hers to her lips.

"Here's to good luck, good health, and happiness!"

She laughed and drank, her black eyes on him. He answered lightly, leaning forward and giving her a soft look:

"Suppose we go out in the boat tomorrow? Eh, Alice? It's crisp and blue and cold, that water, and I can make the little boat clip!"

She laughed, rose to her feet, and set her glass down.

"*Bien!*" she whispered softly. "Tomorrow, *cher ami*, if the sun shines. You'll take care of little Alice? She doesn't want to drown yet!"

He laughed back; then a spark of malice shone in his handsome eyes.

"It isn't a barn-dance, anyway, my dear, and no one will refuse you a card next time!" he returned mockingly.

She looked back over her shoulder and nodded, apparently unhurt. Then she tripped out into the dingy hall of the hotel. There, under the lamp, she opened the other telegram. It was from a woman. Mlle. Mentir read it carefully, her black brows drawn together.

H. gave me your address. Can I help?
Wire just what is needed.

LAURA.

The little *danseuse* bit her lips so hard that the blood started. She drew her own conclusions. Here was a woman whom he had tricked into loving him, no doubt, as he had once tricked her.

"Laura" must be very fond of him—she had given her full address.

The girl laughed bitterly and hesitated, holding the telegram in her hand and balancing Leonard Nicholson's fate. Then the thought of his indifference, his light scorn of her, his willingness to amuse himself at her expense in this dull place, and that last fatal slur about the barn-dance, roused the spirit of evil in her. Her eyes flashed fire.

She had a curious desire to revenge herself on the other woman. She would play them both a trick, and she would keep him here until he was traced by the police. She had intended to warn him that the place was too public, too easily found; but now she set her white teeth again, and, going out, found a telegraph-office and sent a despatch that would reach the unknown girl the next morning. As she wrote it, Mlle. Mentir laughed wickedly.

Your telegram here. Am too ill to write. If you ever cared for the sick and unhappy, come quickly.
L.

It was so amusing that Alice wiped the tears from her eyes as she sent it. Would the fool come, she wondered?

XXI

It was a great relief to Hester when she finally got the money off to Leonard. William Nicholson had been called away on business, and would be gone overnight. Left to herself, she did not go into town, but handed her letter in at the nearest rural post-office. A panic seized her when she saw the clerk glance at the superscription, although she had used the fictitious name that Leonard had sent her. She hurried away, flushed and agitated.

She hated the secrecy, the need to hide things. She could not blame her husband if he despised her, she thought passionately. It was a hateful business, yet—what could she do?

Storm-tossed, she turned, and, plunging into the woods, tramped far away

among the dead leaves and bare tree-trunks. The winter sky was splendidly blue, and she heard the crows overhead. The fresh scent of the pines brought back old memories of girlish sports and gay companions.

She walked far. Gradually her nerves quieted down, and she began to hope that in some new and unexpected way things would straighten out and the world would look like itself again.

She came back to a solitary luncheon, and went up-stairs. She had slept so little the night before that she began to feel worn out and drowsy. It startled her to hear her telephone-bell ring sharply. A maid answered it and came to call her.

"It's Mrs. Warren to speak to you, madam."

Hester went hurriedly. It was not the old lady's habit to talk over the telephone, and something—a vague instinct—alarmed her.

Mrs. Warren's voice came anxiously over the wire.

"Is that you, Hester? Is Laura with you?"

"Laura hasn't been here since the day before yesterday."

There was an inarticulate sound of dismay, and then the thin old voice quavered with nervousness.

"Where can she be, Hester? No one knows. I've asked all the girls. I'm so worried!"

Hester caught her breath. She thought of Laura's threat, which she had almost forgotten in her own worries. She heard the anxious voice again.

"I'm so worried!" Mrs. Warren repeated.

"I'll come right over—we'll find out all about it," Hester answered firmly.

She hung up the receiver, no longer tired, but tense again with fear. She sent the maid running to summon a motor, and, unassisted, flung on her outdoor dress and a long coat. She was dressed when the girl came back and told her that the car was at the door.

Hester ran down-stairs, the maid following with the rug and her furs. It was chilly out of doors now, or it seemed so to her, and a white mist was floating up from the meadows. She got into the motor, sent the maid into the house, and gave her orders.

The car started, jarred slightly, and swung out of the long driveway onto the turnpike. Hester leaned back in the corner and passed her hand over her eyes. She felt so sure that Laura had gone to Leonard that she was trying, as she sped along, to think of a way to bring the girl back unscathed. But the white mist seemed to be creeping into her fagged-out brain. She could not push it out, and she was not clear of it when she went into the old house where Laura's grandmother had lived for fifty years. She felt its silence, without Laura's voice, and the servant who admitted her looked worn and eager.

Hester went up-stairs alone to the old lady's room. Mrs. Warren was walking about restlessly, leaning on her cane.

"Hester!" she cried sharply. "Where is she? Where's the child?"

Hester halted, a slow, deep blush mounting to her hair. Suddenly she felt assured of Laura's mad act. The vacancy, the air of expectancy in the place warned her.

"Tell me just what's happened," she said reluctantly. "When did Laura go?"

"Oh, then, you don't know?" The grandmother came a step nearer, looking at her intently, searchingly. "I thought you would know! Laura was here yesterday, just a little while after luncheon. It seems she packed some things in her suit-case. Mary helped her do it, and thought she was going to visit you; but I didn't know, not until it grew late and she didn't come. Then I asked. What can it mean? Where is she, Hester?"

Hester had a strange expression, but she mastered her emotion.

"We'll find her! I'm sure I can find her for you."

"And you'll take care of her?" the old

lady almost pleaded. "You see, Hester, I'm too old to keep up with a young girl, and Laura has no mother. That's it—she has no mother, and I'm afraid I've spoiled her. Where can she be?"

Hester turned and looked out of the window, avoiding the keen old eyes.

"Give me a little time. I can't think in a moment, but I'll go and look for her; and yes, I'll take care of her!" she added, strangely conscious that she was making promises that she had to keep, and dreading the task a little.

"I can't think where she is!" Mrs. Warren lamented. "It isn't like Laura to worry me so. If she's with a friend, she might telephone, and I've phoned to everybody myself. Oh, Hester, you've been with her; you don't think that she could have fallen in love—that there's any one—"

"For her to run away with?" Hester forced a wan smile. "Don't worry any more—I'm going to find her for you. I—I promise to bring her back!"

"If you only could!" The old lady looked at Hester intently. She had a feeling that the Governor's young wife was in some way responsible. She rose from her seat and followed her visitor to the door, leaning heavily on her cane, an altered figure. "You'll do your best? Had I?"—she lowered her voice—"had I better call upon the police?"

"Oh, no, no!" Hester was terror-stricken. "Not yet! Wait; I'll go—indeed, I promise you—I'll go straight after her!"

Mrs. Warren gripped her hand.

"Then you know where she is?"

Hester pulled away with an involuntary shiver.

"I think I do. At least, I'll go. Don't send for the police, not yet—give me time!"

"I don't want the publicity"—the old voice sharpened—"but she's been gone so long!"

"Hush!" Hester laid her finger on her lip; she heard some one coming. It was a maid with a note for her.

"Miss Laura left this for you, ma'am," the servant said quietly.

Hester took it, waited for the maid to go, and then tore it open and read it, her face turning from red to white. Mrs. Warren leaned on her cane, eying her.

"Is it from Laura?" the old lady asked.

"Yes!"

"Then—where is she?"

"It's from Laura, and I know where she is. I'll"—there was a quiver in Hester's voice—"I'll go after her!"

The grandmother was indignant.

"I can't understand! Why was this kept from me? Laura's so unnatural! If she's safe, why can't you tell me, Hester?"

But Hester was at the door.

"I'll bring her back to you, instead," she replied lightly, in as gay a tone of confidence as she could muster. "Don't worry, please don't!"

Mrs. Warren dashed away an indignant tear.

"She's all that I have left," she said bitterly, "and I'm afraid—Hester, I'm terribly afraid that something has happened to her and you won't tell me!"

Hester stood still at the door, held by the old lady's indignant eyes.

"Nothing has happened, nothing has hurt her yet," she answered slowly. "I'll tell you all I can. You see, there are things Laura might not wish me to tell. She's gone to help a friend in trouble, to give some money, and I—I'm going to bring her back."

Mrs. Warren drew back a little coldly.

"Oh, I see—it's some mystery, and I am to have no part in it! Hester"—she took a step forward—"let me warn you. Don't deal in mysteries at this time, for William's sake!"

The younger woman met her look. There was an instant of tense silence; then Hester's cheek flamed, and she turned to the door.

"I'll go for Laura—that is what you want, I believe. For the rest—" She stopped, went out, and shut the door.

But once in the street, with the wintry

air cooling her hot cheeks, her mind cleared, the mists of the morning vanished. Laura had gone to Leonard to carry money!

The madness of it was almost commensurate with the passion of it. So great was the younger girl's infatuation that she did not even consider her good name, if she could save the man she loved. There was something in Laura's wildness that touched Hester's heart.

At the same time, through all her fear for Leonard, and her pity for him, there ran a thread of doubt. Intuitively Hester knew that Laura must not be with him, even on an errand of mercy. He was himself too wild, too irresponsible, too egotistical. He could not be trusted to take care of the girl, to send her home. The thought of Mrs. Warren, of her anger, her evident suspicion, and her warning, made Hester's temper flare up again; yet she was eager to be off, to show her that she was not to blame for what Laura had done.

She went straight home, and, packing a few necessities in her traveling-case, dressed hurriedly for the long journey. Then she went down-stairs into her husband's study and wrote a few lines. Unaware of their coldness, she framed the sentences to hide her purpose, for he had forbidden her to tell him of Leonard's hiding-place.

"I am going on an errand that has to be done," she wrote, "and you'll understand why I say no more."

She sealed the note and left it on his desk. At the door of the room she halted for a moment, looking back. It was a small, warm-tinted room with two high windows, a deep-seated leather chair or two, the table, and the telephone. There was something about it—its simplicity, the calf-bound books on its low shelves, the chair half turned from the desk—that seemed eloquent of William Nicholson's presence.

Hester sighed. When she first saw that room she was a young bride who expected all the world to love her; and now—

She shut the door and went out. It was just five o'clock, and far off she heard the whistles blowing. In half an hour she would be on the train, speeding northward. The thought made her shiver with loneliness and fear. She had thought much of Leonard, of his cry that he had committed his crime because of something that Ballard had said of her. She was a woman, and that had touched her; but now that she must see Leonard soon, she was afraid.

If her husband had come into the grounds at that moment she would have run to him for shelter, like a child. But she was alone, and he had shut her out!

At midnight Nicholson came home. As he approached the house he noticed its darkness. There was almost always a light in Hester's window, but to-night it was dark.

He had had a weary day. His resignation had withdrawn him from the arena, but not from the aftermath. He was suffering from the outcry that had followed Leonard's escape. The blame had fallen heavily on him, and he had to bear it in a silence that seemed cowardly. That was the worst of it to a man of his high courage.

He looked up twice at those darkened windows. Remembering Hester's face, delicate and tender-eyed and sad, he was touched with a tenderness for her that made him long to brush aside the estrangement. In the morning he would speak to her of it.

No one was up but Chumley, the butler, a gray-haired servant who had been in the family for thirty years. Had Nicholson been less self-absorbed, he would have noticed the trouble in the man's face; but he mechanically refused Chumley's offer of food and drink, and stopped for a moment in his study to glance at his mail.

He was very tired, and he must go to bed, but he looked over his letters. A small one, with his wife's writing on it, caught his eye; he opened it and read

her note. He read it through twice, and then his hand fell heavily at his side. There was no need for explanation. He knew that she had gone to Leonard!

He stood for a long while with his hands clenched, incapable of movement, almost incapable of coherent thought, a wave of passion and futile wrath overwhelming him. Then he remembered that he had forbidden her to tell him where Leonard was, and he could not go after her and bring her back.

Craving for air, he threw open a window and let the night wind blow in his face. It roused him, but only to a keener appreciation of his misery. He knew the inevitable discovery, the clamor that would follow it, the ruin. And it was impossible to stop her; he did not know where she had gone!

He walked the floor, the tumult of feeling spending itself in futile agony. He was cut to the heart by the certainty of her love for Leonard. It was his fault; he had done wrong to marry her, to try to reconcile her youth to his maturity. He was approaching middle age, and she was still a mere child; the fault was entirely his!

There was no way to save Hester, he could not loose detectives on her, he could not follow her. When the day broke he was still sitting before his desk, his hands stretched helplessly across it, his head bowed.

XXII

THE swaying of the train, traveling at a tremendous rate of speed, had the effect of calming Hester. She lay in her berth, in strange tranquillity, watching the crevice of light that shone through the heavy curtains.

It was clear to her, now, that she had to come. At the last moment her courage had failed her, and only her promise to Mrs. Warren made her take the train. In the crowd at the station she had been recognized, and a murmur of comment had reached her ears. It was not amazing in the circumstances,

but it had affected her deeply. She had always been accustomed to admiration, and since her marriage to the Governor she had been the center of attraction; but these people had stared rudely at her, almost with animosity.

She remembered hurrying through the throng at the gates and going down the long platform beside the train, a porter carrying her portmanteau. No one had spoken to her. She had recognized two or three of the more fashionable set, but they had apparently ignored her.

She was relieved that there were only a few strangers in the sleeper. She did not wish to be known. She must manage to elude observation when she left the train; for if she was followed she would betray Leonard's hiding-place.

Of course, Laura was ahead of her; but there had been an accident to a freight-train, which had delayed the express preceding hers, and it was very possible that Laura had been on it. If so, Hester might yet overtake her.

The thought made Hester's heart sink. She wanted to take the girl home, but she dreaded the meeting, and Laura's certain outbreak of temper and jealousy. There was something akin in the wildness of their natures, but it seemed to Hester that the last few weeks of her life had been too full of trouble for her to take up any one else's burdens.

Once or twice in the night the train stopped at stations, and the sudden glare of electric lights showed her the drip of rain on the dirty window-panes. She had lain down fully dressed. She sat up now and raised the shade to look at the platform, shining with moisture, and the bobbing umbrellas of the few belated travelers. The commonplace aspect of what she saw seemed to remove the tragedy of Ballard's death and its long series of consequences into the limbo of forgetfulness, and she looked out like a child who sees new scenes.

It was only when the train plunged on again, cleaving the illimitable darkness like an earth-bound comet, that the strain

of anxiety and loneliness once more took hold of her. She lived over again the moment when Nicholson first told her of Ballard's death, and added that the quarrel had been over a woman. Not even then had she realized that she was involved, for Barhyte had no cause to take up the cudgels for her. Not until Leonard's wild words, that night in the motor, had she supposed that it touched her individually, and that to save her from publicity the young men had been silent.

Yet there was nothing in her life, nothing in the breaking of her engagement to Ballard, that her husband could not know—nothing but the caprice of a spoiled girl. She thought of Ballard now, of his boyish love for her, of her girlish outgrowing of it, and of her marriage. The tragedy of his death and Barhyte's conviction for murder seemed out of all proportion to the quarrel that must have led to it. She had no knowledge of the other woman, Ballard's sister, who had started the greater conflagration. But always, through it all, there came back her husband's face as it had looked when she told him of her part in Leonard's flight. William Nicholson's stricken expression haunted her. It seemed to her that he might have felt relief when he did not have to give his brother up to death, but the look he had given her was one of anguish.

Meanwhile the train rushed on, plunging at last into the daybreak. The storm had passed with the darkness, and Hester saw the sun rise on a perfect day. It was late in the afternoon, however, before the express rushed up to the junction where she had to change to a little, puffing local that would carry her to the Canadian village in which Leonard had hidden himself.

While she was waiting for the little train to arrive on its belated errand, she made some inquiries, and found that the express on which Laura must have been had preceded hers by only six hours. She felt a throb of relief. She had been car-

ried so far by impulse, by excitement, by a kind of obstinate determination to keep her word to Mrs. Warren; but now, at this stage of the journey, her heart throbbed painfully. She was going to come face to face with Leonard, and he would be sure that she loved him!

Her helplessness in this crisis, and the certainty of it, almost frightened her; yet now she could not go back. Whether it had been wrong to come, whether it would be of any use even to Laura, was beside the question. She was suddenly aware that she cared deeply for the man she had left behind—for her husband. Like a flash of lightning the truth broke in on her—she cared, and he did not!

Then the thought of Laura stayed her. She knew too well the girl's headlong impulses, her disregard of conventionalities, and her devotion to Leonard, and he—Hester's cheek reddened at the thought that she could not trust him. She must intervene to save Laura. She had promised, and she had to go on.

Time passed, and perhaps the most poignant thought that came to her was that she might have been followed. In the noisy little train, making its way slowly across the Canadian country, she glanced cautiously at the faces opposite. Sometimes she was sure that she was watched, and moved uneasily. It would have been so easy to follow her, and yet she had taken no precaution, had done nothing to cover her trail.

But there were only strange faces there, a few men and one or two women—French Canadian, apparently, and absorbed in their own business. Two of the men read French newspapers, a third snored unashamed, and one of the women had a crying baby. Hester drew a long breath. There was no one here, surely!

Yet the horror of it was with her when she finally came in sight of the long village street, with its one hotel and its little church. There were so few people here that if any one had followed her there would have been no possibility of

escape. There was certainly no concealment. She found that Laura was already there—only a question or two supplied that information; and she went at once to the hotel.

If Leonard was still in the place, no one seemed to know him. It gave Hester a little thrill of hope that he had gone, that he had got safely away before Laura arrived. Then she remembered that he could not go without money, and her heart sank, for her remittance could scarcely have more than reached him.

She entered the hotel and asked for Laura Warren. They told her that she was there, but had spent all the morning in her room. Divining trouble, Hester refused luncheon, and went up, unannounced, to knock at the door which they said was Laura's.

It was a long moment before there was any sound. Then she heard some one moving in the room. She knocked again softly, and this time the key turned reluctantly in the lock.

"Hester!"

Laura's gasp of amazement had a note almost of relief; yet she shrank back a little, as if she did not wish to be seen. Hester pushed the door gently open and came in.

"Laura! Tell me, you haven't been here long? And Leonard?"

Laura gave her a strange look, walking away from her toward the window. It was a small hotel room, scantily furnished, and Hester's quick eye caught the signs of recent arrival—the open suit-case on the table, Laura's long coat and hat and gloves lying on the unused little bed.

But Laura did not look at her. She stood, instead, staring out of the window at the wide view of the river. It was a radiant day, and the water was as blue as a corn-flower.

"You didn't tell me you were coming, too," she said in a low voice.

Hester ignored this. She stood looking at Laura, a kind of radiant pity in her face. For, suddenly, she seemed to

see things as they were, not distorted by the close view of the participant, but outlined more clearly in perspective, until all the objects that had been shadowy to her became distinct.

"I didn't know that you were coming," she said; "not until your grandmother told me that you had disappeared. Laura, she is almost prostrated by it. Why didn't you tell me?"

"Why should I? You would have tried to stop me!"

"Of course I should have tried. You couldn't come this way. Why, Laura, if it got out at home, they'd talk of it forever!"

Laura received this in stubborn silence. Hester began to be afraid that the girl had already seen Leonard, and was taking his view of things. She went over and took hold of her hands, pleading with her.

"We'll leave him money, Laura, and then you'll go home with me."

"I'll never leave him a cent!" the girl retorted passionately, breaking away from her. "You think I'm here to run away with him? I'm not! I—"

She suddenly covered her face with her hands, but she did not weep. Dry sobs shook her from head to foot.

"I thought you had come to help him." Hester was perplexed. "And I came, too, with money," she added, a little faint red going up in her pale cheeks.

"He doesn't seem to need money!" Laura told her.

Hester looked at the younger woman, still more bewildered.

"I can't think what you mean!"

Laura wet her parched lips.

"He's out there," she said at last, pointing through the window at the river. "He's out there—in a boat—with a French *danseuse*, a cabaret singer. They say her name is Alice Mentir—and he wrote you that he meant to kill himself!"

There was no reply.

After a moment Laura went on with pungent bitterness:

"Did you come here, too, to save him?"

"No," Hester answered, though her hands were trembling. She knew at last what she had really come for. "Laura, I came to save you from yourself—and from him!"

"As if you were the sort of person to be any one's savior!"

"I don't think you have any right to speak to me like that!" said Hester, indignation rising in her.

The other girl turned white.

"Then why do you torment me?" she broke out wildly. "I loved him—you know it, and you know how I felt! I came—I would have come barefoot, all the way, to help him—and when I got here I found out the truth about him. They don't know here who he is, but they do know what he is, and they told me—oh, they didn't varnish it! He was only laughing at us, playing on us, when he wrote of his despair. He has spent all the money you gave him entertaining this creature. She's out there in the boat with him now—at our expense—making merry, and we thought he was in want and in despair!"

Hester listened, her eyes, too, on the blue water. It was the scandal of a small place, she knew that; but coming through the medium of a girl's voice, and seen with her passion-stricken eyes, it was horrible, a distorted jesting with the misery of life. She recalled, too, something of Leonard's fickleness, of his idle and selfish life, and her heart sank; but in the midst of it all her mind cleared sharply. She had come to take Laura home; she could not fail poor old Mrs. Warren.

"We must go home," she said firmly. "We can leave money for him. He's got to go to Brazil or Argentina, if he can get away before they find out about this place. You—you'll come with me, Laura?"

The younger girl dragged her hands away and stood looking at Hester.

"Do they know about it—know where I am?"

"No, no! I promised your grandmother to bring you back. She never even guessed you cared for him. No one knows, no one will know, if you come now!"

"I don't want him to know!" Laura retorted passionately. "If they tell him I've been here, I want him to think that they've made a mistake, that I didn't know he was here!"

"You mean you don't want him to know you cared?"

Laura nodded. She could not speak. She was putting on her long coat and her hat; her hands trembled as she threw the things back into her bag and prepared to leave.

Hester turned and walked to the window. She was torn by the strangest conflict of feelings—her disgust at what Laura had told her, and the remembrance of that night in the motor—the darkness and the stars and Leonard's lips upon her hands.

She stood looking down into the long street that led to the river. It was very tranquil. A few French Canadians chattered in a doorway; a big, friendly dog lay half across the path. Somewhere out there Leonard was sailing across the waters with his French actress. And she had spent sleepless nights believing that this man cared for her!

A vision of her husband—pale, estranged, dignified—rose before her. Then she started with a strange excitement. A man's figure was approaching—a figure distinctly unlike the others. Was it Leonard?

She leaned forward, both hands resting on the window-sill, and looked down eagerly. The man came on, turned from the shadow of the buildings, and advanced under the very window. She saw that she was mistaken, and then—before she could draw back—he looked up and their eyes met.

It was George Barhyte.

(To be continued in the September number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

Larry and the Germs



by
William Slavens McNutt

"BE disorderly," the saleslady behind the hotel cigar-counter implored.

"Shake some of your cigarette-ash on the nice, clean case. That's right! Got any mud on your shoes? If you pick any up around town, don't leave it on the mat at the door. Bring it in and kind of distribute it around on the floor here and there. Have some civic pride, kid! Help us get the old town soiled enough to live in comfortably again! This burg's been cleaned and beautified till it ain't fit for anything except to look at; and it ain't even good-looking, only to them that hates germs.

"What are some people so sore about germs for, will you tell me? The little beasts may be ugly, but you can't see 'em without a microscope. Why pay money for a magnifyin' glass to get a peek at things you don't like the look of when you see 'em? Huh?

"Germs don't bother nobody till some messy person hunts 'em up and gets mad at 'em. 'Most any kind of a germ is a good guy if you let him alone. All he wants to do is to lurk unseen in your tooth-brush or your soup or somewhere, and have a little quiet fun in his own way. If you let him alone, he won't bother you.

"Why, 'way back in them dim, dead days when benighted people thought things that looked clean to the naked eye was so, they lived, didn't they? Them poor, ignorant people, they lived happy and content with millions and millions of germs they didn't know about. And them germs didn't bite 'em, did they? Huh? Not very often. A germ ain't no trouble-hunter. You let him alone and he won't bother you; but he's the abysmal kid once you hunt him up and make faces at him. He'll fight to the death when he's roused. Why rouse 'em? Huh?

"Suppose some scientific guy with his own way to make in the world finds me livin' happy and ignorant with a lot of germs that ain't deadly till they're discovered. He needs the money—and the publicity—so he discovers 'em. They get mad and bite me, and I die. The scientific bird gets the credit for bein' right, and I get my share of the family lot in Greenbrier Cemetery.

"My friends know the Latin name of the thing I died of, but that don't buy me any wings—or ice, accordin' to which I need. No! I'd rather live stupid to a ripe old age than get so wise and die young of what I learned. Leave me live

till I'm eighty or more, and never mind wastin' time tryin' to find out what I died of then. I'm content to call it 'Providence,' and let it go at that. It's as good a guess as any other!

"Ain't I right? Huh? The more you know about what kills you, the quicker it does. It used to be, when people didn't know much and just had stomach-aches, they'd put on a mustard plaster and be cross to their friends for a while, and get well.

"Now they're wise. When they get a stomach-ache, they know that ain't what they've got. That old-fashioned pain can't fool 'em. They know they've got appendicitis. So they will all they've got to the doctor in part payment for what he's about to do to 'em, and take a chance.

"Part of most of 'em lives to pay the rest of the bill. All that the part that does live gets for the money spent is a scar, an' the part that didn't live in a jar of alcohol for a souvenir. A mustard plaster hung on the wall would be just as good a reminder that mince pie an' pickles at midnight is a poor bet!

"Germs has good taste. They abound on anything pretty, or wherever it's comfortable. A rose is pretty, ain't it? Yes, but there ain't nothin' sanitary about a rose, believe me! It ain't been hermetically protected from the air and sunshine, and bugs and things wipe their feet on it in spite of all you can do. Did you ever stop to think what else them bugs and things may have wiped their feet on before they got around to the rose? After you think it over, you wouldn't dare back your nose up to an unsanitary rose and inhale.

"And a cozy room! Oooh! Never set in a cozy room. You'd never believe how partial a germ is to a nice, fluffy pillow or a soft couch, and a dainty curtain is just the same to a germ as a club is to a bachelor. And a pipe! Why, a germ falls for a pipe like a Mexican for a cigarette. Every pipe-stem is just literally swarmin' with germs. Once you find it out, you either have to quit smokin' or die of some-

thin' terrible—somethin' that gives you an awful agony and has a name to it like a couple of Russian generals.

"Oh, it's all off with you, once you find out about germs—if you believe what you learn. A germ is worse on your happiness than a mother-in-law is supposed to be. This—now—therapeutics may be therapeutic, but it ain't nice. Boilin' water is all right for coffee and surgical instruments, but it's kind of tough on a nice, well-seasoned pipe, ain't it? You can't be sanitary and happy at the same time. It ain't done!

II

"THIS town had a fit of scientific sanitation that made the visitation of any other kind of plague seem like a blessing from on high. We all of us got so blamed clean we wasn't fit to live. I mean what I said. We all found out that livin' was so unsanitary that it wasn't safe no more. You can't live without breathin', you know, and with every breath you take to keep life in your body, you suck in enough deadly germs to kill you ten or twelve times over—if you know about 'em. Oh, it's a hard problem!

"It all come about over Esther Wilfred's gettin' a higher education. A higher education is some like vaccination. It works different on different people. It insures some folks against all the diseases of ordinary ignorance; some it inoculates with a poisonous brand of knowledge that hurts 'em worse than a whole head full of stupidity.

"It worked bad with Esther. She was a fine, healthy, rollickin' girl before she learned about germs, and just as pretty as a man thinks his bride is. She went to high school and then to the university here in town, and it didn't hurt her. Her father and mother both died before she was eighteen, and she was a little sad sometimes; but mostly she was just a dandy, ordinary girl that 'most any man who didn't have a wife would like to marry. She had a nice little fortune of her own and plenty of friends. Life looked real rosy for her un-

til she got the idea she didn't know enough.

"That was the beginning of the trouble that come later. She was just about as good as engaged to Larry Thurston when the change come. You know Larry is some fellow. His dad left him a couple of banks and a good share of the property in this town. It didn't bother Larry a bit. He might have gone to the dogs, or he might have settled down to business and got fat and come to be a grouchy tightwad and a good business man. But he just kept on cruisin' around the Pacific on his sailin' boat, and huntin' a little, and playin' golf, as he'd always done. He knew enough about the business to make the men he hired to run it stay honest, and not enough to keep him from havin' a good, clean, healthy time.

"Him and Esther made a fine pair, and I guess the weddin'-bells would 'a' rung on time if she hadn't come to realize how little she knew. But she done so, and it was all off. Away she went to an Eastern university to learn all about why she was, and what she could do to help it. Larry beat it for a year's trip around the South Sea Islands in his sailin' boat, and the rest of the people here went on livin' and dyin' and gettin' married same as usual.

"After three years Esther come back. She was all het up about germs, and yet she brought one with her on purpose. They say it's a good bet to set a thief to catch a thief. I guess Esther must 'a' figured that the best way to fight bad germs was to back a worse one in the battle against 'em. The germ she brought with her was worse. It was a human germ, and its name was Professor Schwagenauser. It was fat and wore spectacles, and waved its arms when it talked.

"And oh, how much it knew! You wouldn't believe one greasy little fat man could contain all that knowledge. He knew all about why folks that were perfectly well were going to die in a minute. To hear him tell it, everybody was right at the point of death on account of bein' friendly with germs. I never happened to

hear him explain how so many people come to live so long, here an' there in the world, before he arrived and found out that they couldn't possibly live at all unless they knew what he did, and did exactly as he told 'em.

"I was tellin' you that Esther had some money. Well, she was usin' part of it to back the professor in a campaign of education in our fair city. You see, she'd learned from him that we couldn't none of us live no longer unless we done altogether different, and the professor's first job was to tell us what to do.

"He was some teller. Before I met him I thought I was a well woman. Two minutes after I'd been introduced, a headache germ got mad and bit me. Three minutes later I realized that my indoor life and my close association with filthy tobacco had made me a regular stampin'-ground for a whole herd of consumption germs, and that if one of 'em hadn't already bit me it soon would. Five minutes later I was a profitable customer for any kind of a doctor from a corn specialist on up.

"His description of the dangers we was constantly in, from the deadly germs that abounded in every place that a human bein' cares about goin' to, made a war correspondent's account of bein' almost shot for a spy read like the running story of a checker-game. Esther had him give talks to all the women's clubs and write pieces every day for the newspapers. Pretty soon they got a regular movement started to clean up the city. They got up a kind of a society, and had a slogan—'Safe, Sane, and Sanitary.'

"They lived up to the last specification only. The city got sanitary, all right. Club and high-school and university girls by the hundred signed pledges not to let nobody kiss 'em. Professor Schwagenauser explained how lips was favorite hangouts for the very worst of the germs, and how many a young girl's life had been cut short by her havin' been bit by a germ from her beau's mustache. The girls signed pledges not to let anybody kiss 'em, and the fellows signed pledges not to try.

"The poor kids suffered along with the rest. Little boys that had been in the habit of gettin' five cents' bonus every time they washed back of their ears had to take three or four splashes a day all over in water doped with some kind of germ-poison that smelled like a severe illness. Little girls had to quit playin' with dolls, 'cause germs was in the paint on their faces and the rope hair of their heads. Babies had to can their Teddy-bears 'cause the fur of 'em was as full of sure death as an unloaded gun. The club-women got after the city council, and had health laws passed till a man couldn't spit in his own back yard without bein' pinched and sent to jail.

"The city got new kinds of patent cans to cart away ashes in. People who were pledged to be safe and sane, as well as sanitary, spent all their wakin' hours huntin' the town over for a speck of honest, ordinary dirt. When they found it, they put it under lock and key, and guarded it like so much radium, till they could get it scientifically burned up or sprayed or somethin'. We found out that every restaurant in town was servin' downright poison instead of life-givin' food, and that the stuff we cooked at home was still worse, if possible. The street-cars an' office-buildin's was nothin' but so many death-traps.

"An' the homes o' the people! Oh, the homes o' the people! Why, it was just like committin' suicide to go into your own home until you'd sprayed the walls and floors and ceilin's with some kind of ba-zootski that germs couldn't get along with. The town smelled like the operatin'-room of a hospital, and everybody prepared for the worst in spite of all precautions.

III

"POOR Esther Wilfred was worse hit than anybody. She'd learned a lot from Schwagenhauser and others. She knew more than the rest of us, so of course she was the saddest of the lot. When she went away, she was a healthy, bumptious girl with a twinkle in her eye and a nice laugh.

When she come back with Professor Schwagenhauser and so much knowledge, she was a sad, quiet, care-worn woman, and looked as hopeless in the eyes as a St. Louis baseball fan.

"She dressed plain, because she knew that germs always hid in frills or feathers or furs. She knew better than ever to go out anywhere to dinner, because death would await her in the steak, or hop out of the salad and bite her, or creep up from behind the mashed potatoes and do its worst. She had her meals cooked and served in her apartment, here at the hotel. When she went out, she carried a handkerchief soaked in some stuff that germs flee from — and I don't blame 'em for dislikin' it. She smelled like a nurse on duty and acted like an undertaker's wife durin' business hours.

"An' Larry! Oh, my! Larry wouldn't do with her at all. No, indeedy! Why, the pipe Larry smoked would have killed him in a minute if he'd known about it. And the worst of it was he wouldn't learn. No! He was stubborn about it. He'd just suck on that brown old germ-laden stem and laugh at her when she warned him; so she bade him a firm farewell. I guess they had some words when she bade him a final good-by—told him to choose between his germs an' her, so to speak—'cause Larry acted pretty well cut up and Esther was sadder than ever.

"'What do you think of this germ thing?' Larry asks me. 'Do you think maybe you'll live a while yet, or has this Professor Schwagenhauser got your goat along with everybody else's?'

"'I'm bein' very careful,' I says. 'As careful as I can, handlin' tobacco in this contaminated air in here, and all that. I think Professor Schwagenhauser is a wonderful man,' I says, 'an' a benefactor to the race.'

"'He's a fine press-agent for a hospital!' Larry says. I didn't get him at the time, but his remark come to me later.

"An epidemic set in among the people here in town. Huh? I don't know. Nothin' in particular. Just an epidemic of all-

round sickness. The doctors reported the increase in business and wrote pieces in the papers about it. They said that the increase in sickness proved Schwagenauser was right, and talked about how lucky it was that he'd come in time. They spoke about what a terrible thing it would have been if he hadn't come at all. If people got sick, they wouldn't have known why or how.

"Schwagenauser said he'd told 'em what to expect, and now he was proved right. He give out a lot more rules for warfare against the germs that was to blame for the epidemic—and a lot more people got sick.

"And then the big sensation come. Esther Wilfred herself was took down. In spite of all her precautions, some kind of a germ got through her guard and stung her. It seems that the germ that finally did the business with her was some kind of a rare, ripsnortin' son of a gun. He was somethin' that even Schwagenauser didn't know much about. In fact, the professor couldn't place him at all. He called in some other doctors in consultation, and they couldn't agree on what kind of a germ had done the business; so, of course, they couldn't decide just what kind of a disease she had. She had somethin', all right; and while they argued about what it might be, she pined and got worse.

"Schwagenauser used her case as a horrible warnin'. When such as she, he pointed out, who was so careful and so full of knowledge, could be bit in the prime of life by a germ that was so sly and desperate that even he hadn't been able as yet to find out where it lived and what its name was, what could ordinary, ignorant, careless people expect?

"That threw a good scare into us all, an' we all took even more precautions, but it didn't do any good. The unknown germ that had bit Miss Wilfred got busy, and took a fall out of a lot more people. The doctors reported dozens of people that had been bit by the sly devil they couldn't locate nowhere, and in the mean time Esther Wilfred got worse.

"Poor Larry Thurston! He was such a hearty, good-natured, husky josher that nobody had ever realized how deeply he cared for Esther. He hung around the hotel here and proved that a man can get worse than the *delirium tremens* and never take a drink. Worry? Say, a hysterical mother alone at night with a kid chokin' himself black in the face from croup would be a good imitation of the Sphinx compared to him! He wore himself out so that I got to bettin' in my mind on which would go first, him or her.

"And then one day Schwagenauser gave it out that Miss Wilfred would probably die. He said they hadn't been able to determine the precise nature of her malady, and so couldn't cope with it. He said it was a most interesting case. That made it much nicer for them that loved her, didn't it?

"Not for Larry Thurston, you bet! Larry didn't care nothin' about germs or interestin' cases, or Schwagenhausers or humanity in general. He did care a whole lot about Esther Wilfred. He had a long talk with Schwagenauser that afternoon, and after it was over he come to me. I never yet see any human being as much in earnest as he was.

"She ain't goin' to die!' he says to me. 'No, she ain't goin' to die! I won't let her,' he says.

"Of course I knew it was only talk, but he was so dead in earnest I almost felt as if he could make her live by just wantin' her to so hard.

"He went away, mutterin' to himself, and later I see him speakin' with the manager. A while after, the manager come over to me, and he says:

"I'm goin' to give you a little vacation, Miss Kelly,' he says. 'Not exactly a vacation, either,' he says, 'but a change of work. Mr. Thurston wants you to do something for him for a few days, and I have agreed to let you go.'

"What does he want of me?' I ask.

"I don't know,' the manager says. 'He didn't tell me. He said for you to be ready at ten o'clock to-night, and he'd

have a taxi call for you here. You needn't go if you think it looks fishy.'

"'Fishy!' I says. 'Anything that Larry Thurston wants is good enough for me. I'll be ready at ten.'

IV

"I WAS right on tap at ten o'clock, and the taxi-driver called for me as expected. I got in the cab, and he drove me down to the water-front and out onto a pier. He stopped the cab, and Larry Thurston opened the door for me.

"'It was awfully good of you to come,' he says. 'Right this way!'

"I follow him down a gangplank, and I see that I'm on his sailboat. There's a tug hitched to her, and I'm no sooner safe on deck than they untie the boat from the pier and the tug starts away with her.

"'Don't be afraid,' Thurston says. 'My Aunt Sarah is aboard, so you'll be properly chaperoned.'

"'I ain't afraid,' I says. 'But gee, I'm curious!'

"'Come,' he says, and I follow him down into the cabin.

"He opened the door of one of the little staterooms and motioned for me to look in. I done so—and I thank Heaven that no germ ever gave me heart trouble; for there in the berth lay Esther Wilfred, sound asleep!

"'Larry shut the door and stood lookin' at me. He was as white as the best brand of flour and shakin' like a bum with no overcoat in a snow-storm.

"'I kidnaped her,' he says. 'She's still under the influence of ether. Oh, I got her out of the hotel easy enough. I bribed everybody I could, and tricked those I couldn't. I'm goin' to make her live!'

"'Now wasn't that nice? Here I am in on a kidnapin' party, and I begin to think I'm goin' to sea with a ravin' maniac. For the first time I'm real scared.

"'Well, well!' I says, tryin' to be nice and natural. 'I think it's a swell idea. We're goin' to have a nice sea trip, huh? Where's all the rest of the folks in the party?'

"'There's no one aboard but you and Aunt Sarah, Esther, myself and the crew,' he says.

"'Oooh! Goin' to sea with a dyin' girl and a ravin' crazy man! I try a stall to get him to go back.

"'Why, you forgot to bring a doctor,' I says. 'That won't do at all. You'll have to go back and arrange to get one right away.'

"'I didn't forget,' he says. 'I'll have no doctor on this trip. Oh, don't think I'm crazy,' he says. 'I'm not. The doctors gave her up, didn't they? They said she would die, didn't they? Well, I say she's not going to die. They said they didn't know what ailed her. I say I do. They couldn't discover what was the matter with her, for the good and sufficient reason that there's nothing whatever the matter with her—that is, nothing physically wrong. The only thing in the world that ails her is the hypnotism of gloom and fear. She's let her mind dwell on the danger of disease so long that she's dying of nothing whatever but the expectation of death. She needs joy and life and the salt spray on her face. She needs normal, happy people about her. She needs to be laughed at by people who *can* laugh, until she can laugh at herself. She needs to be torn absolutely free from all her morbid studies and associations of the past few years.

"'There's nothing the matter with her, and yet I watched her slipping away from me back there, slipping irrevocably away into eternity, and I was powerless to hold her back; powerless because my common sense had no weight in the balance against the scientific stupidity of Schwagenhauser, and men like him, who have learned so much that they don't know anything. She's the woman I love, Miss Kelly,' he says. 'I've loved her for years, and waited for her, and I'm not going to stand by and see her die!'

"'Wow-woof!' I says. 'I think maybe you're right, at that; but suppose there is somethin' real the matter with her, and she dies at sea without a doctor, after you—'

"Don't!" he says, and he put his arms in front of his face and staggered as if somebody had hit him. 'As you value her life, don't put fear into my heart! Do you think this has been easy for me to do? I came near to temporizing and bringing a doctor along. If I'm right, that would have been a mistake, and a mistake made through my cowardice. She was dying under the care of the doctors, and if there's nothing wrong with her—as I believe—except morbid fancy and fear, I've done the right thing in not bringing one. I beg of you not to say or do anything that will shake my faith that I am right. I've got to bring her back from the clutch of death with my certainty that I am right. We must make her laugh. We must make a huge joke of the whole affair. We must! That's why I brought you. She enjoyed stopping at the stand to chat with you. She used to laugh with me over the things you said and the way you said them. Help me to make her laugh. Help me to break the hypnotism of gloom and fear that is killing her, and for Heaven's sake don't do or say anything to shake my faith in the treatment! I know that if she should die, I'd be liable for murder or something close to it. I don't care anything about that. If she should die, I don't care what becomes of me. I alone am responsible. You knew nothing of it, and Aunt Sarah doesn't—yet Esther's aboard. She won't die! She must not. We won't let her!'

"Say, I liked that guy. I still thought he was two-thirds dippy, but I was kind of strong for his brand of insanity. I put out my hand, and I says:

"'You bet we won't!'

"And we shook on that till my fingers cracked.

V

"WHEN Esther woke up—ouch! If she'd raved or got mad, it would have been easier; but she was just resigned and forgiving.

"'I know you did it for love of me, Larry,' she says, real sweet and sad. 'I forgive you!'

"'Forgive me!' Larry says, laughin' out loud. 'That's a fine way to thank me for savin' your life! You're not goin' to die, you know,' he goes on, kiddin' her. 'You may think you are, but you can't. You're too blamed healthy. There ain't a therapeutically clean thing on this ship,' he says, 'and you're goin' to eat and grow fat on food that Schwagenhauser says would kill a government mule.'

"Esther sighed and shrugged.

"'Ah, well!' she says. 'After all, as well here as some place else. If one must die, it matters little where.'

"'Oh, it's much nicer to die at sea!' Larry goes on with his kiddin'. 'If you do succeed in dyin'—which you ain't goin' to—I'm sure you'll have lots more fun doin' it on the open ocean.'

"The next day he carried her on deck, in spite of all her objections, and we both of us pretty near kidded the life out of her. She done her best to get sicker as time went on, but she couldn't make it stick. We run up the coast to the northern end of Vancouver Island, and her cheeks got rosier and her eyes brighter every day, in spite of her.

"One day Larry was kiddin' her about bein' unable to die, and in spite of all she could do, she laughed a little. That laugh broke the spell, and she begun to cry. Then she got up on her own feet and grabbed Larry around the neck.

"'Oh, Larry, I love you!' she sobs. 'I love you, Larry, and I'm goin' to get well. Tell me I am!'

"'Of course you are,' Larry says, still laughin'.

"She looks him in the eye and nods her head.

"'Yes,' she says, 'I know it now. I'm going to get well!'

"And then we had Larry on our hands. As soon as Esther declared herself, and he see he'd won out, he busted under the strain and went all to pieces. He shook and sobbed and hung on to her, and begged her to tell him that she really would get well, and that she wasn't goin' to die and leave him.

"She laughed at him and kidded him, and told him he was a silly fool to think that she'd die and leave him when she loved him so. She got well faster tryin' to brace him up after he busted than she could have any other way.

"We ducked around the north end of Vancouver Island into the Inside Passage, and touched at Campbell River. Esther sent wireless messages from there back home, tellin' her friends she was all right, and not to worry. Then her and Larry went over to the missionary's and got spliced. The happy couple beat it off on the yacht for their honeymoon, and I got the next boat back here, and come to work once more.

"What — Schwagenauser? That was funny about him. The graft was so good for him in this town that him and his wife had took a house out on Eighth Avenue, and was fixin' to bother the community permanently. Some reporters went out

there one Sunday afternoon to interview him. They didn't get any answer to the bell, so they strolled around to try the back door. The back yard had a high fence around it. The reporters opened the little gate, and there in the back yard sat the germ-proof, therapeutic Schwagenauser and his wife at an old table with no cover on it, eatin' sausage and sauerkraut out of the paper dishes them things come in from the delicatessen-shop, and drinkin' beer out of a rusty tin bucket. Schwagenauser was helpin' the feed down with swigs from a long, black pipe that you could smell a block away. The reporters spoke about what they saw, and Schwagenauser had to go somewhere else.

"The town's gettin' livable again; but help it along when you can. Be disorderly now and then! And if you see a germ anywhere, smile and speak nice to him. A germ ain't a bad little guy, if you treat him right!"

THE SKULKER

I ASKED a flower, a bee, a rose,
A skylark at the brink of dawn,
A fountain in a garden-close,
A cricket on a daisied lawn;
I asked the river flowing wide,
The firs upon the mountainside.

I asked the billowy sea of jade,
The hills of melting amethyst,
The golden patches in the glade,
The meadow by the sunlight kissed;
I asked the runlet in the glen,
And all the haunts of nymphs and men.

I asked the white clouds in the sky,
Drifting like treasure-laden ships;
I asked the breezes fleeting by,
Laden with sweets of flower-lips;
I asked a lad of shining face,
A maiden of a winsome grace.

I asked of all and asked again:
"Where dwelleth Care? Doth any know?"
And birds and flowers and hearts of men
Had naught of will nor power to show;
For none could name the darkened place
Where Care was hiding his grim face!

Elizabeth May Montague

MAJOR-GENERAL LEONARD WOOD

The All-Round Soldier Who Is Ranking
Officer of the United States Army

by Judson C. Welliver

FOREMOST among the apostles of national preparedness and efficiency stands Major-General Leonard Wood, senior officer of the United States army.

General Wood is one of those rare men who inevitably find the place where they belong in the world, simply because they belong to the place and the place belongs to them. He was educated for the practise of medicine, but tastes and ambitions alike drew him toward a military career. Cut out by nature to make the ideal American soldier that he is, destiny would not be denied. He found his place by the sheer process of elbowing himself into the line for it, and then climbing.

We are wont to think of the United States as a country that has been peculiarly blessed in the enjoyment of peace during most of its existence. Yet it is a fact that every generation has had enough of military experience to ripen and finish a group of able soldiers, and to give them all the needed opportunity to demonstrate their quality. General Wood is one of these men who seem to have been favorites of opportunity, and fated always to hear its knock at the door.

In a generation in which it seemed that no man could hope for a military career of any distinction, without the foundation of a West Point training, General Wood was denied that seeming essential. He came into the army through the unpromising side door that admits contract surgeons to serve with it.

In theory, a contract surgeon is not presumed to command troops at all; but theories have to be readjusted to facts when men like Wood collide with them. Wood couldn't help commanding. He was naturally a soldier. He wanted to command and to fight; men wanted to be commanded by him and to fight under him. Theory was brushed aside, and Wood rose to be the acknowledged first soldier of the country.

But he has been vastly more than a mere soldier. He has been exactly the kind of soldier that the American army must have, with initiative, moral courage, and resourcefulness. He has been great as administrator, sanitarian, organizer, fighter, publicist, and leader of community thought. He is even an expert sailor, and knows more about the sea than a multitude of men who are mighty good sailors.

FATHER OF THE "PLATTSBURG IDEA"

General Wood was the father of the college training-camps for military service, which antedated the business men's camps of which Plattsburg is the prototype. He carried his idea of training the college men right up to the presidents of the institutions and won their support for it. He made them see that such training would be of untold value in physical and disciplinary ways during the students' civic careers, entirely aside from its value in giving the country a body of men capable of effective military duty.

Later, he originated the "Plattsburg

idea." From 1908 down to the present he has talked and urged preparedness on every possible occasion. He foresaw with a vision that was of the statesman rather than the soldier that the world was verging on a time when no nation would dare to imagine itself secure merely because it preferred peace; when potential power would have to be concentered into positive readiness to use that power in self-defense.

As chief of staff of the army, he initiated measures that made possible the participation of the National Guard and the individual citizen in a wider measure of military training. He backed and inspired the movement for popular rifle-practice, encouraged the formation of civilian rifle clubs, and has been a chief factor in devising plans for the expansion of the army. He has studied military systems all over the world, has been the guest of the Kaiser during his visits to the German military establishment, and is familiar with every detail of the Swiss, Australian, British, and other modern systems.

WOOD'S EARLY CAREER

General Wood is a native of New Hampshire, where he was born in the year before the outbreak of the Civil War. His father, Charles Jewett Wood, served through that war—an experience which inspired him with a distaste for military life quite as decided as his son's liking for it.

From the first formulation of a life ambition, young Leonard was determined to be a soldier. He was proficient in all outdoor sports—riding, hunting, camping, athletic games, and the like. Living near the sea, he took to the water early, and became an accomplished sailor.

His father's opposition to a military career prevented the son from realizing his ambition to go to West Point. Instead, he was sent to Pierce Academy, Middleboro, Massachusetts, and then studied medicine at Harvard, where he received the degree of M.D., which he didn't particularly want.

But a little detail like being educated for a doctor couldn't keep a young man like Wood from getting into the military life on which his heart was set. Having satisfied his father's ambition by making himself a doctor, he proceeded to pander a bit to his own notions by making himself an army doctor. And that was the occasion, later, for one of the most curious circumstances in his career.

Until after the brief war with Spain, in 1898, compelled attention to its deficiencies, the army never had anything like an adequate medical department. Congress provided an utterly insufficient force of doctors, and then gave the President a general authorization to hire "contract surgeons" to piece out the organization. Contract surgeons take military rank, but are not supposed to command troops or exercise general authority.

Wood became one of this corps of skilled and highly useful medical men of the army. Some people insist that he never would have been worth his salt as a doctor if he hadn't had the incentive of a military setting, as it were, for his endeavors. There is no doubt, however, that he did develop into an excellent physician and skilful surgeon.

What was more important in its effect on his future, he was everlastingly yearning for the chance to learn about things strictly military. He wanted to get where there was real, hard, rough-and-tumble service to be faced.

CAMPAIGNING IN THE SOUTHWEST

That aspiration was responsible for his assignment to serve with the Fourth Cavalry in the campaign against the Apaches, which gave Dr. Wood his first opportunity to prove how useful he could make himself in a strictly military capacity. He didn't need to do it, of course, but he simply wasn't capable of keeping out of the fighting and strategic end of the game. He was tough as nails, could keep the trail longer than any redskin, ride harder, and endure more privation. He didn't seem to know what it meant to be tired;

and that was the paramount qualification for hunting down the bands of very bad and very active aborigines to whom the army was then devoting its attentions.

In a modest and yet very earnest way he developed notions as to the most effective methods of managing the campaign, and his military associates learned to rely on his judgment. Repeatedly he was placed in command of detachments sent out on especially hazardous and difficult duty, and he always made good. He fought several minor engagements, and always won.

The late General Henry Lawton was a captain in Troop B of the Fourth Cavalry, and asked that Wood be sent out with him. Lawton could look right down through the skin of a doctor and see a great soldier; so as soon as he got where there was no superior officer to interfere, he began pushing over to Wood a miscellany of military duties, the work of line officers.

This was in the last expedition to capture the notorious Geronimo—the one that captured him.

When Lawton made his official report on the enterprise, he devoted a good deal of space to describing the soldierly performance of his medical officer, whose conduct had been of such conspicuous merit that a Congressional medal of honor was voted to Dr. Wood. This is the highest honor an American soldier can obtain, the special reward for conspicuous gallantry in action, the Victoria Cross of our military scheme.

Later, the fact that Congress had voted him that medal for specially meritorious conduct proved an awful embarrassment to his critics when President McKinley nominated him for a brigadiership in the regular army, and a determined effort was made to prevent his confirmation by the Senate. But that story comes later.

WOOD'S FRIENDSHIP WITH ROOSEVELT

Following the Apache campaign and other service in the West, Dr. Wood was assigned to duty at Washington. There

he met and married Louisa A. Condit-Smith, daughter of a prominent family of the capital. There, also, he met Theodore Roosevelt, a lively young man of whom folks were beginning to take notice, and whose name has since been somewhat frequently printed in the newspapers. Wood was as quiet and reserved as Roosevelt was impulsive and explosive. It never has been decided which of the two could ride farther, work harder, or do more general tearing around. They were temperamentally as unlike as two men could well be; and they became intimate friends.

There is a common misapprehension that General Wood enjoyed special facilities for getting on in the world because he was the friend of Roosevelt. As a matter of fact, his first service at Washington was as "attending physician to army headquarters"—which means White House physician—under President Cleveland. He enjoyed the close friendship of Mr. Cleveland. When the Spanish War started he was occupying the same position at the White House, associated with President McKinley.

Like Roosevelt, who was then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Wood wanted to get right into the thick of the difficulty. Roosevelt started to organize the First United States Volunteer Cavalry, popularly known as the Rough Riders, and asked that Wood should be assigned to command the regiment, with himself as lieutenant-colonel. It is not purposed here to recount the exploits of that famous regiment, full of men destined to fame. It managed to get into the forefront at Santiago—something of an achievement in a war in which most of the commands devoted their chief efforts to the struggle for a part in the fighting.

WOOD'S WORK FOR CUBA

After the fall of Santiago a new problem was presented. There was need for an officer who could clean up the captured city, and Wood, as a physician and a scientific sanitarian—for he had discov-

ered this new science and perfected himself in it as part of the modern soldier's equipment for the best possible service—was the one man in sight for the job. He took charge at Santiago, and did his work so well that he was placed in command of the troops that were left in Cuba after peace was declared, with the rank of brigadier-general of volunteers. Mr. Root, then Secretary of War, recommended Wood for this duty, which involved the task of making Havana a habitable town and transforming Cuba into a safe place in which to live.

Cuba, in fact, needed not only a military commander and a sanitary expert, but a man who knew all about organizing a governmental system, and who had the skill and the tact to impose his ideas on the people there. Wood had made a study of the problems of civil administration. He knew more than most Americans about colonial policies and methods. He had won the confidence of Washington by his work at Santiago. So when he was placed in general command in Cuba, he had a rare opportunity to prove his metal as administrator, organizer, and steersman to a brand-new nation.

Practically single-handed he organized the Cuban republic. To him as administrative chief is due a very large measure of the credit for the sanitary reform of the island and for the elimination of yellow fever.

This service for the first time commanded general attention to Wood. President McKinley nominated him to be a brigadier-general in the regular army; and this brought out the curious circumstance to which reference has been made.

WOOD BECOMES A BRIGADIER

Having entered the army in 1884 as a contract surgeon, and two years later having been appointed as assistant surgeon in the regular medical corps, he had risen to the rank of captain in the medical corps when he entered the volunteer service as colonel of the Rough Riders. As a volunteer officer he had shown himself a

genius, possessed of qualities that it was highly important to keep in the service of the regular army.

But here came in a strange quirk in the law. It was forbidden by statute to promote General Wood out of his turn in the medical corps. His rank as an officer of volunteers had nothing to do with his standing if he returned to the regular army. He was not needed in the medical corps, and was very much needed in the line, because the government had the Philippines on its hands, and a fine mess they were proving.

Under the law, then, President McKinley could do either of two things—he could make Wood a second lieutenant of regulars, or he could make him a brigadier-general of regulars. There was no intermediate rank to which he could lawfully appoint him.

So Mr. McKinley seized the common-sense horn of the dilemma, and named Wood to be a brigadier of the regular army. That appointment was made February 4, 1901, and conservatism in the Senate shook its gray locks for quite a while before it got around to confirming that promotion.

FIVE YEARS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Wood was a very young man to be a brigadier, and his opponents persistently pointed out that, by dint of seniority, he would presently be a major-general. He would be a very youthful major-general, and would be entitled to remain in active service at that rank until he should be sixty-four years old. So, they said, if a war should arise, we should have the edifying spectacle of a great country entering the field with a doctor in command of its army!

That was a telling argument with some people, who didn't know Wood and his capacities. But one wonders how many men there are in the country to-day who wouldn't thank Heaven and the memory of William McKinley for Wood, if the country should get into a war. We know Wood better now.



MAJOR-GENERAL LEONARD WOOD, COMMANDER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE EAST, AND RANKING MAJOR-GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

From his latest photograph by Brown Brothers, New York

While Congress was ruminating, Wood was sent along to the Philippines, where the Moros needed him, though they didn't know it yet. The Moros being good Mo-

ammedans, had been equally hostile to the Spaniards and to the Christian Filipinos. They didn't like the Americanos any better, albeit—chiefly owing to the

sharp lesson taught them by General Pershing—they presently came to entertain quite a respect for this new outfit, which seemed so insistent about asserting its authority in unwonted places.

General Wood, as commander of the Department of Mindanao and governor of the Moro provinces, set about to complete Pershing's work and to make its beneficial results permanent. He provided a species of self-government for the Moros; made their leaders as friendly as possible; kept them believing that they were really suggesting the administrative and industrial betterments that he had framed for them; made the chiefs responsible for the welfare of the people, and enjoined them to maintain law and order in their districts. And all the time, within his hand of velvet, he had the threat of force ready for effective application if they should fail to perform.

They performed. General Wood organized markets, established provincial courts that administered real justice, got agricultural methods improved, kept the Moros believing that they were doing it all themselves, and reformed the intractable tribes so thoroughly that a few years later, when so ardent a pacifist and anti-militarist as Mr. Bryan visited the islands on his tour of the world, he could only find things to praise.

OUR RANKING MAJOR-GENERAL

After finishing his work in Mindanao, General Wood was made commander of the entire army in the Philippines—the largest establishment under a general officer in our service. He was virtually a secretary of war for the islands, though without any civil authority. He reformed the scheme of army administration, discovered leaks and disarrangements which

were costing the government millions, and eliminated them.

Thence, in 1908, he returned to the United States as commander of the Department of the East, and in April, 1910, went to Argentina as a special ambassador. In July of that same year he became chief of staff of the army—commander-in-chief under the general staff system. He held the position until April, 1914, when he retired from it to become once more commander of the Department of the East. He is to-day the ranking major-general of the army, and as such, in case of war would be entitled to his choice of commands, unless the President should appoint somebody else over him.

General Wood has several times represented the United States government on military embassies to Europe, and has been the official guest of England, France, Germany, Austria, and Russia. In Europe he is accounted one of the best equipped military experts in the world, especially in the realm of organization. Incidentally his achievements as an administrator have won for him the degree of LL.D. from Harvard, Williams, and Pennsylvania.

But all that General Wood has done thus far would appear trifling compared to the impression that the country would get of his services if—as seems only too probable at the time of writing—it should be drawn into war. He is largely responsible for putting the general staff system in its present efficient working order. He has found ways to cut out red tape and in a thousand ways to promote efficiency. He stands for a bigger army, a better army, and a system of military training that would insure, in case of need, such a mobilization of the military resources of the United States as would guarantee against national disaster.

TRIFLES

It is such little things as these—
A broken fan, a withered flower—
That hold in elfin tapestries
A lifetime in one hour!

Dorothy Louise Smith

THE STAGE



FLORENCE DAGMAR, LEADING WOMAN WITH VICTOR MOORE IN "THE CLOWN," RELEASED BY THE LASKY FEATURE FILM COMPANY

BILLIE BURKE AT WORK

SINCE the advent of the feature photoplay, hot weather has ceased to possess the terrors it was wont to inspire in theater-proprietors. The owners of big houses are particularly fortunate in being able to arrange with the film magnates for tenancy during the period that was formerly a total loss, with the stage idle except for rehearsals and the seats covered with brown holland. This year there was particularly lively bidding for Broadway auditoriums in which to display screen offerings.

At the Globe, for instance, there is Billie Burke in her first serial, "Gloria's

Romance," written by Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Hughes, and divided into twenty episodes. The George Kleine press-man asserts that Miss Burke receives four thousand dollars a week for posing for this picture. Even if we had not been taught to believe that all these newspaper figures are exaggerated, I would still claim that I was right when I said to her at the studio the other day, before I knew her salary:

"Miss Burke, you certainly earn every penny you get!"

I had just had my first view of the actual making of a motion-picture. You may imagine in some degree the impres-

sion the thing made on me when I quote what I said to the young star at the finish:

"Nerve-racking is no name for it. I should feel as if the Recording Angel were constantly on my trail!"

They were at about the eighth episode at the time of my visit. I began at the daylight studio on the roof, where Walter Edwin, Mr. Kleine's courteous director-general gave me a seat inside the rail,

just beyond the side-lines of a courtroom scene that was in process of taking. Miss Burke sat in the witness-chair, and stepped down to welcome me with a reminder that it was a far cry from her rooms at the Savoy in London, where I had last interviewed her three years ago.

She had scarcely any make-up on, only a few lines about the eyes. The men, on the other hand, were frights in the garish



DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS AND
BESSIE LOVE IN THE TRI-
ANGLE PHOTOPLAY BY MR. FAIRBANKS.
"THE GOOD BAD MAN"

glare of sunshine from the skylight. Henry Kolker's face was of a greenish hue, and William T. Carleton, matinée idol in the early days of the Casino, and now playing Miss Burke's father, sported heavy, purple lips.

There can be little danger of a movie actress falling in love with her leading man, from what she sees of him in love-scenes. He



BILLIE BURKE, STAR IN THE GEORGE KLEINE FILM NOVEL SERIAL BY MR. AND MRS. RUPERT HUGHES, "GLORIA'S ROMANCE." THIS IS MISS BURKE'S SECOND APPEARANCE IN MOTION-PICTURES, THE FIRST HAVING BEEN IN "PEGGY"

From her latest photograph, copyrighted by Savony, New York

always looks his worst when made up, just as the actor in the speaking drama generally looks better in his war-paint than he really is. There is a very simple reason for this—in the motion-picture realm red is anathema, and must never be used, for it comes out black in a photograph.

While they were making ready a millionaire's mansion on a lower floor, I was invited to tea in Miss Burke's suite, which occupies a special corner in the enormous

building. Her dressing-room opens off a prettily decorated parlor, into which many of the sixty different gowns she wears in "Gloria" have, perforce, overflowed.

It was during this interlude that I met George Kleine, a charming man, proud of his business and ambitious for its future. He regrets the use of the term "movies," and was surprised when I assured him that the word appeared in good and regular standing in some of the latest dictionaries.



MARGARET ANGLIN AND GEORGE LE GUERE IN A SCENE FROM OSCAR WILDE'S COMEDY,
"A WOMAN OF NO IMPORTANCE"

From a photograph by White, New York



TWO PERSONAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE VITAGRAPH FILM STAR, ANITA STEWART,
WHO HAS A WIDE FOLLOWING GAINED WHOLLY
IN THE MOVIES

The picture in the oval copyrighted by White, New York



LUCILE WATSON (IN CENTER) AND THE DOLLY SISTERS IN THE NEW FARCE, "HIS BRIDAL NIGHT"

From a photograph by White, New York

"The word 'photoplay,'" he told me, "is the result of a competition. I suppose it is too long for popular every-day use. My own preference is for the English 'cinema,' which is coming into more and more favor over here. It is a rather remarkable fact," he added, as I inspected a strip from the "Gloria" film that had just been handed me, "that these pictures, as they are taken, remain exactly the same size—one inch by three-quarters of an inch—as when Edison first invented them. They are enlarged, you must remember, no less than sixty-one thousand four hundred and forty times, so that as you see them on the screen they occupy a space of sixteen by twenty feet."

The new set being now ready, we adjourned to the indoor studio, representing a sumptuous interior, and fitted up on

two sides as luxuriously as if the whole were to be actually seen on a regular stage, which, of course, requires three sides. The walls were even covered with genuine silk, which cost I don't dare to tell you how many dollars a yard. In the bedroom adjoining, my attention was called to an idiosyncrasy of the cinema, which calls for sheets with a bluish tinge, to make sure that they will come out white. Also the dress shirts of the men were of the same blue tint.

"All ready!" said Mr. Edwin, who is the jolliest director imaginable, big and fat, and with an abounding good-humor.

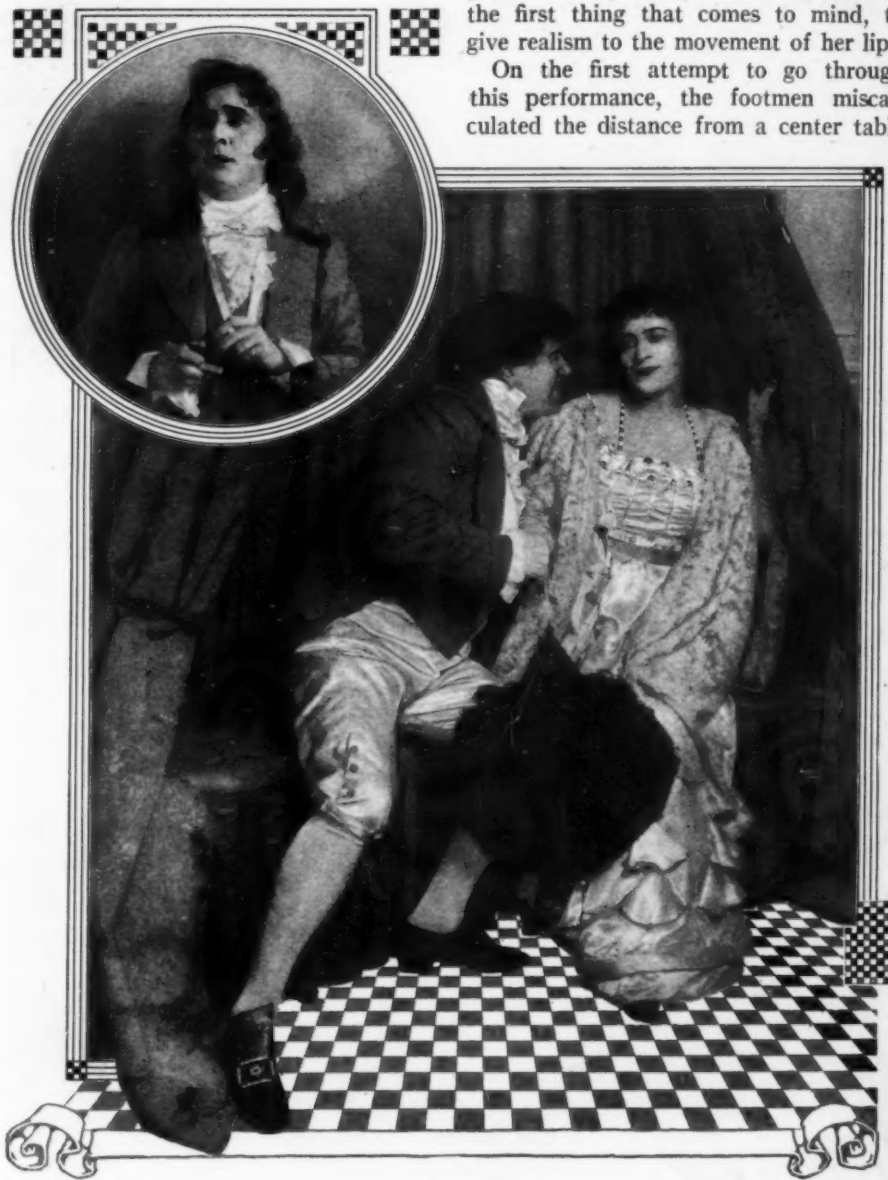
The Cooper Hewitt lights were gleaming hard on the set from the right, while we spectators sat off to the left, glad of the red rays that softened their glare. The episode now to be taken was one showing *Gloria's* father coming in to

• speak to her after an illness. Two footmen in gorgeous livery bear her out again on a couch, while the father walks by her side, beaming down on her fondly, while she looks up at him and murmurs:

"Where are we going now—to the movies?"

She is not supposed to say this in the play, but the audience must note that she talks; and as the authors haven't given her any lines, Miss Burke utters the first thing that comes to mind, to give realism to the movement of her lips.

On the first attempt to go through this performance, the footmen miscalculated the distance from a center table



E. J. RATCLIFFE AND KATHERINE KAELED IN A SCENE FROM ARNOLD DALY'S REVIVAL OF "BEAU BRUMMELL"—IN THE CIRCLE, MR. DALY AS BEAU BRUMMELL

From photographs by Sarens, New York, and White, New York

bearing a vase of flowers, and over it went, Miss Burke's adopted daughter Cherry—serving as maid in the play—catching it just in time to save a smash.

"Too bad!" was all that Mr. Edwin said. "You'll have to do it over."

"But don't you rehearse before making a picture?" I asked him, mindful that the camera had been clicking away all through the episode.

"Oh, no," he replied. "You see, oftentimes the actors will do a thing perfectly at a rehearsal, and then we'd lose it. We prefer to run the risk of wasting film."

So the procession from the room started once more, Mr. Carleton marching in advance and humming a song from one of his old opera successes to liven the proceedings. Indeed, very often Miss



MARIE TEMPEST STARRING IN THE FARCE HIT, "A LADY'S NAME"



Burke has a man at the piano to play for her while the pictures are being taken.

The scene was a success with this attempt, and then ensued a phase of picture-making which must try the nerves of the performers more than all else, although Miss Burke went through the ordeal with a patient smile which was almost saintlike. This is the taking of what are called "stills"—views obtained with a regular camera, and used for advertising and lobby purposes. Infinite pains are spent over these, which required a third more time to secure than did the actual motion-pictures.

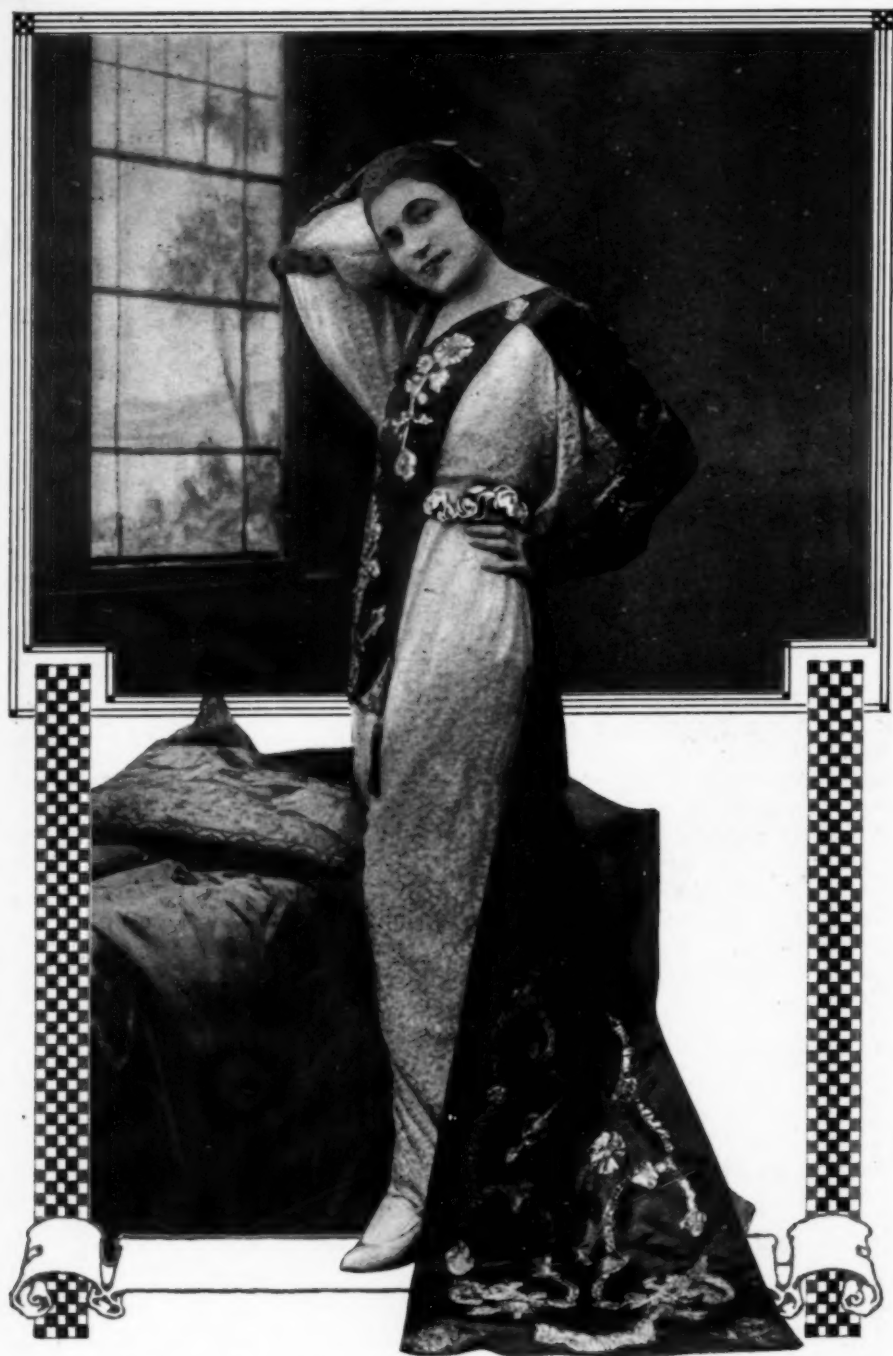
I am told that the Lasky people snap them at any favorable opportunity while

DUSTIN
FARNUM AND
MARY MERSCH
IN THE
BALCONY
SCENE OF
"ROMEO AND
JULIET," IN A
PALLAS PIC-
TURE RELEASE
OF "DAVID
GARRICK"

the episodes for the screen are being taken. I should think some such scheme would be universally adopted, as I can imagine no more nerve-racking ordeal

than to sit for one's portrait a dozen times a day after having already gone through the acting process.

It was half past five o'clock before



BERTHA KALICH, STAR IN MOTION-PICTURES WITH THE WILLIAM FOX CORPORATION. ON THE SPEAKING STAGE MME. KALICH PLAYED MIRIAM IN "THE KREUTZER SONATA"

From her latest photograph by Mishkin, New York

work was over. Miss Burke had been at the studio since ten in the morning, which meant that she must leave her home in Hastings by automobile before nine. To an actress accustomed to rising around eleven, this last item alone counts for much. Add to this the preliminary selec-

tion and fitting of more than sixty costumes, for all of which she must pay herself, and many of which are of no further use to her, and one may perhaps realize that four thousand dollars a week is not such an exaggerated amount as it might seem at first blush.



PAULINE FREDERICK, ONE OF THE STARS WITH THE FAMOUS PLAYERS FILM COMPANY

From her latest photograph by White, New York



FRIEDA HEMPEL, GRAND-OPERA STAR, NOW IN CONCERT, AS SHE APPEARED IN THE TITLE-RÔLE
OF FLOTOW'S "MARTA"

From a copyrighted photograph by Ira L. Hill, New York

In the selection of the gowns, by the way, another element besides their beauty and appropriateness to the occasion must enter in. That is the colors adapted to camera use.

"How can the film people afford to pay so much?" you ask.

Simply because negatives can be duplicated and shown broadcast at one and the same time, while actresses and actors themselves cannot be in more than a single place at once. As an example, take the Charlie Chaplin picture, "The Floor-Walker," under his new six-hundred-thousand-dollar contract. It is said that after the first week's release the bookings for this country alone amounted to thirteen hundred thousand dollars. Two hundred prints were made of the film, and at fifty dollars a day for the first week's rights, thirty-five dollars for the second week, and twenty-five for the third, you can figure the profits for yourself.

"Gloria's Romance" is, I should say, the first unsensational film serial ever screened. Only in the first two chapters, laid in Florida, where *Gloria's* automobile dashes into the sea and she is later captured by the Seminoles, are there any of the hair-raising episodes that have done so much to put the movie serial into ill-repute with

people who ask at least reasonable plausibility in the entertainment offered them.

Miss Burke is steadily reading plays, and, if she finds one that suits, you may expect to see her face to face over the footlights next winter. "Gloria" is only her second venture in the cinemas, her first having been "Peggy," filmed by Thomas H. Ince, whose latest picture,



GERTRUDE DOLAN, WHOSE DANCING WAS A FEATURE OF "POM-POM"

From a photograph by Ajeda, New York

"Civilization," has just scored a hit next in dimensions to that of "The Birth of a Nation." Spectacle is the right word to describe this remarkable showing of war horrors, which gives a really wonderful presentment of what must have taken place when the Lusitania was torpedoed. One sees first the interior of the submarine,

The best thing about "The Fall of a Nation" is Victor Herbert's music, written especially for this production, which the author, Thomas Dixon, once a New York clergyman, describes as the "story of the origin and destiny of our republic." Mr. Dixon evidently hoped to duplicate, if not surpass, the sensation aroused by "The Birth of a



LOUISE LOVELY,
UNIVERSAL FILM
COMPANY,

From a photograph by—

FEATURED IN
"BOBBIE OF THE
BALLET"

—Hartsook, San Francisco

then the sighting of the projectile, next its speeding through the sea. Follows a scene on the liner's deck, with passengers promenading and children playing games. Suddenly comes the explosion, a mad rush to the life-boats, some of which are seen to overturn and spill out their hapless occupants when half-way down the steamer's side. All the foregoing was actually enacted for Mr. Ince on the waters of the Pacific.

"Civilization" took a year in the making, and, to quote from a line in the Criterion program, "every death-dealing device known to the modern science of war was used." Besides the submarine, this includes armored motor-cars, giant Zeppelins, and big guns galore. As I remarked to Mr. Ince, there is but one consolation in viewing these horrors piled upon horrors' head—they probably make war even more dreadful than it actually is, which is going some in these days.

Nation," shown in the same Liberty Theater. The main idea of the thing—preparedness—has already been done in "The Battle Cry of Peace," and although some remarkable battle-scenes are shown, and the photography is on a high plane of excellence, the story abounds with so many absurdities that the spectators cannot restrain laughter at many of the crises. The United States is represented as invaded by a foreign foe, under whose heel its Eastern portion languishes for a period of two years, when an association of women effects its deliverance. Inexplicably, the last object flashed on the screen is an enormous crown.

Less than fifteen years ago the status of the motion-picture was so humble that biograph showings were chiefly used as "chasers" in vaudeville houses. To-day the magnitude of the business may be judged from the fact that there are one hundred and twenty-five film-manufac-

turing concerns in the United States, and nine hundred new pictures are turned out every month. Scarcely more than double the fingers of your two hands will be all that are required to reckon up straight theatrical producers, while against ninety-two theaters in Greater New York devoted to speaking productions, there are said to be seven hundred and thirty-eight in which movies are shown.

THE STRAND HAS A RIVAL

New York's newest theater is the Rialto, built especially for screen purposes on the site of Hammerstein's Victoria at Seventh Avenue and Forty-Second Street, the heart of the so-called Tenderloin. It's a really beautiful house, with no stage, merely a platform on which the singers stand. "The temple of the motion-picture," S. L. Rothapfel calls it, and the opening night, April 22, was an affair of as much moment as the inauguration of any playhouse within recent recollection. All the dramatic critics were on hand, and Borough President Marks lent his presence to show municipal recognition of so worthy an addition to the auditoriums of the town.

A fitting opening bill for the Rialto was filmdom's cleverest recruit from the actor folk—Douglas Fairbanks in a rattling scenario of his own—"The Good Bad Man," while the second week's bill showed how much better a man than his stepfather young Willie Collier, Jr., is going to be. This boy's work in "The Bugle Call" is really of a very high order. Triangle Films are shown in the Rialto, which boasts an especially fine orchestra, with Alfred L. Robyn, composer of "The Yankee Consul" as organist. The house is managed with the same military precision that did so much to place the Strand in the forefront.

The latter, where Mr. Rothapfel first embodied his high ideals for picture theaters, is now under the equally efficient direction of B. A. Rolfe, who used to send out special musical comediettas in vaudeville. Much thought and care

enter into the make-up of Mr. Rolfe's programs. For instance, when he had Katharine Eggleston recite "The Star-Spangled Banner" in the week of New York's great preparedness parade, he placed her immediately after a showing of the United States troops in Mexico. To obviate uncertainty in the audience as to whether it should rise or not, he ordered the orchestra not to break into the tune until the very end, when an American flag was revealed up-stage, flying from a staff held by *Columbia*.

SOME ACTOR CHAT

The cinemas have done more than provide economical entertainment for the masses and summer tenants for theater-owners. They have done much to remove the dread of a rainy day out of the actor's reckoning. When you suddenly think of a player whom you have not seen in months, or possibly years, don't imagine that he or she is out of it, or perhaps in the Actors' Home. It is quite reasonable to suppose that the missing one may be luxuriating on a fat salary in a sumptuous residence out on the Pacific coast, where long spells of sunny weather make a movie paradise.

Arnold Daly, for instance, earns enough through his film work to enable him, now and then, to follow his stronger bent toward the legitimate. Last year he produced revivals of "You Never Can Tell" and "Candida," this year one of "Beau Brummell."

Victor Moore, on the other hand, seems to have deserted the legitimate for good and all. He has cast in his lot with the Lasky Feature Film folk, and spends most of his time in California, where his latest screening was in "The Clown," a view from which forms our this month's heading. It is eight years since Moore was "the talk of New York" in George Cohan's musical comedy of that name, which ran nearly all of one season at the Knickerbocker.

Florence Dagmar, leading woman in "The Clown," has made her biggest suc-

cesses by reflection, as it were. That is to say she was playing ingénue rôles in stock companies in Seattle and Oakland—she is a native of Portland, Oregon—when Cecil De Mille, director-general of the Lasky forces, chanced to see her in a movie for which she had incidentally posed, and offered her a contract. Her first Lasky release was with Robert Edeson in "The Call of the North."

Writing, as I do, in the last days of a particularly cool June, it looks as if the movies were not to have summer-time Broadway to themselves. Although the Hippodrome suddenly closed on June 3—in order to prepare for next season's new spectacle, it was announced—new shows are constantly being sprung, and some of the old ones have decided to hang on even after their last nights were announced. For instance, there is Oscar Wilde's "A Woman of No Importance," which Margaret Anglin had to quit to fulfil a date in St. Louis. Realizing that it was Wilde's smart dialogue that drew audiences to the Fulton, the management decided to continue the run, which, of course, a hot wave may have interrupted long before you read these lines.

Did you know, by the bye, that Cohan & Harris, back in 1908, proposed to give Wilde's "Florentine Tragedy," a production that never went further than the announcement? I hope somebody will do his "The Importance of Being Earnest" next season. This is his most brilliant work. Miss Anglin played in it at the Empire revival in 1895.

In "A Woman of No Importance," *Mrs. Arbuthnot* appears in only two of the three acts. When Miss Anglin was compelled to withdraw, on May 27, Edyth Latimer, an English actress, was engaged to replace her, Holbrook Blinn remaining in the cast as *Lord Illingworth*—a part created in London by Beerbohm Tree in 1893.

George Le Guere, who plays the son, *Gerald*, is of an old Southern family, and was born in New Orleans. During his college career at Georgetown University

he was active in both dramatic and literary circles, and decided to take up the stage. His first professional engagement was with Robert Edeson in "Strongheart," after which we find him as leading man in "Under Southern Skies," opposite the heavy of Henry Walthall, of "Birth of a Nation" film fame.

When William Hodge starred in "The Man from Home," young Le Guere created the boy, and played the part eight hundred and thirty times. The last two seasons he divided between "Along Came Ruth" and "Mr. Wu." I am told that he scored a marked success with Jane Cowl, some fifteen months ago, in "The Song Bird," a play by the Hattons, which never reached New York.

This is one of the sad phases of a player's career—to make a personal hit in a piece which is itself a failure. Annie Hughes, the English actress who is the *Mrs. Allonby* in "A Woman of No Importance," registered just such a high spot in the season's record last October, when appearing as the mother in "Mrs. Boltay's Daughters." Miss Hughes's facial expression and final outburst of "Oh, Borizka, forgive me!" after listening to Rita Jollivet's arraignment, actually thrilled one.

Miss Hughes is one of those rare persons who did not go on the stage because of any love for the work. Her chief motive was her desire to oblige her mother. She began while still in short frocks—which would not mean childhood nowadays, by the bye—and an early part was *Cedric*, the child hero in "Little Lord Fauntleroy." She has played with the Kendals, E. S. Willard, and Henry Irving, and her versatility is such that she scores whether as *Saucers* in "A Bit of Old Chelsea" or as a keen-witted woman of the world in the Oscar Wilde rôle.

Should Miss Hughes ever be made a star, her manager will have little trouble in finding a vehicle for her. There will be no such limitations in the choice as those that handicap Marie Tempest, for

instance. The public have come to expect from the latter fine clothes, a pert sauciness, and a strong claim upon the sympathy of the house. These elements are not easy to combine in one play, so poor Miss Tempest has been on the chase for a winner ever since she found her first one in "The Marriage of Kitty," back in 1902.

She has at least come pretty close to the desired article in "A Lady's Name," a farce by the author of "A Pair of Silk Stockings," in which she is now appearing. It's full of snap and sparkle, and gives Miss Tempest all the things to do that the audience expects from her.

A GORGEOUS EYEFUL OF FOLLIES

This has been Shakespeare year with a vengeance. The bard of Avon has invaded even the Ziegfeld Follies, the tenth anniversary production of which devotes no fewer than seven of its eighteen scenes to Shakespearian travesties. Bert Williams is, of course, *Othello*, jealous of one *Vernon Cassio*, a dancing-teacher, while Bernard Granville makes a vociferous *Romeo* to the beautiful *Juliet* of Ina Claire. Then Sam B. Hardy, late of "The Princess Pat," appears an exact duplicate of Lyn Harding's *Henry VIII* on the same stage; but perhaps the most striking episode of all is that on the banks of the Nile, where Shakespeare's heroines are seen, clothed in 1916 adaptation of the splendors of their various periods, and promenading against a gorgeous background of Joseph Urban scenery.

Urban is, in fact, easily the star of the show. It is as if the spell of the movies were over the Follies, and the eye alone thought worth catering to. After all, this is the sense that does most to decide the success of an offering, so there is little doubt that the big New Amsterdam will be packed all summer, for Urban out-Urbans himself in the beauty of his sets, the costumes are ecstatic visions of color, and the girls—well, the Follies' own portrait-gallery can't match them.

For novelties the palm must go to the

sixth scene, "Escaping the Movies," with an electric-spark effect which pleases as greatly as it mystifies, and a unique framing for Bernard Granville's "Good Old Bachelor Days" song. The chief fun-maker is Fannie Brice, recruited from vaudeville, with a close second in a newcomer, Don Barclay, just out of burlesque. Young Carl Randall again dances like a feather, with William Rock, Frances White, and Ann Pennington as other capable devotees of Terpsichore, to say nothing of Bird Millman tripping the light fantastic on the wire.

THE LIBRETTO FAMINE

Shortage in play material is evidenced in many ways, chiefly, however, in the field of musical comedy, where original ideas are so scarce that composers, to keep up with the demand, have for some time been setting straight farces to music. "Very Good Eddie," based on Philip Bartholomae's "Over Night," is a notable instance in point. After running half the season at the little Princess, this amusing piece has been moved into the bigger Casino for the summer.

Again, "Step This Way," the show with which Lew Fields came into the Shubert in May, is only a new name for "The Girl Behind the Counter," which introduced Vernon Castle to real Broadway attention nine years ago. Lew Brice now plays Castle's part, the *Hon. Bertie Epsom*.

In connection with this latter offering one may note the difficulties that managers have in satisfying their actors' demands in regard to the billing. The placards in the subway announcing "Step This Way" read: "All-Star Cast and John Charles Thomas." A strict interpretation of this line would imply that Mr. Thomas is not a star—a result which, I am sure, was far from his mind when he stipulated that in consideration of stepping down from the grand-opera atmosphere of "Alone at Last" to knock-about musical farce, he must be featured in the printing.

The Sanitary Hermit

by
Freeman
Tilden



THERE is a party being made up, among the summer boarders at the Mountainview House in North Ordway, to drive over to Sugarloaf and see the hermit. Round trip, one dollar and a half. The party now lacks only one of being three more than the horses can draw. Will you join? Very well; your place is on the back seat, where you can hold brisk conversation with the deaf lady. Giddap!

On the right, ladies and gentlemen, is the Balancing Rock. We shall not stop to investigate that natural phenomenon to-day. That is another dollar and a half next Monday. On the left is Rattlesnake Hill, where one stunted rattlesnake was seen in 1874. Giddap! We are now within shouting distance of Lovers' Leap, the same spot being another dollar and a half some Thursday. Giddap! We are now drawing near the habitat of Morris, the hermit. Everybody out and walk!

Before we approach this mysterious ground, a word or two about the hermit. He has lived on the mountain thirteen years, yes, sir, and has never spoken to a woman. No, sir, never! Some people

says as how it was a woman who drove him to this lonely life. A lot of folks say he's cracked—rats in his cupola; but he's harmless as a kitten. Don't mind if he hollers at you. It's just his way. Yes, the road is sort of rough, but you won't mind it so much coming down.

On the right is Morris's spring. The water is said to have wonderful medicinal qualities. To the unpractised eye it seems to analyze thirty per cent of dead leaves, rotting twigs, and visible microbes, but it really contains iron, phosphates, and a touch of radium. So does almost any water, I am credibly informed; but as you are paying a dollar and a half for your trip, you had better enjoy this sparkling draft to the full.

On the left is the hermitage. See the little garden! Morris raises his own vegetables. Isn't it interesting? He built that cabin all alone, without any outside help.

And there's Morris himself! Hello, Mr. Morris! Don't mind if he looks kind of savage at you, ladies. He won't talk to you, but he wouldn't harm you. We just came up to look at your place, Mr. Mor-

ris. Can we go in? Thanks. This way, ladies and gentlemen!

II

It was a clear, zesty morning of the last week in June. The hermit of North Ordway came out of his cabin, took a few paces toward the foot-road, then turned and surveyed his establishment. It was all there. The upside-down words—

HANDLE WITH CARE

still spoke to the eye with the same pristine brilliancy which they had had when they were painted on a packing-case, before Morris employed the packing-case to patch the side of his shanty. The stove-pipe leaned rakishly out of a hole in the side of the shack. The ax was sunk into the top of a chopping-block near the door, in the customary way.

But Morris walked up and down in front of the cabin, with his hands behind his back and his black beard sunk against the top of his vest. Morris was perturbed.

If you just run over in your mind the list of things that might perturb you, but wouldn't perturb a hermit, you get the full force of the picture. Morris had not quarreled at breakfast, because there was nobody to quarrel with. The war news hadn't upset him, because he had no newspaper. His neighbors' hens and children hadn't sinned, because there were no neighbors. And he never spoke to women, anyway, which abolishes at one slap about ninety-nine per cent of the possible causes of a man's perturbation.

Morris sat down upon a rock and sighed. Then he got up on his feet and groaned. Then he sat down again and swore softly.

Then he took a hoe and went into the garden, and began to slay weeds. But he couldn't keep at it. He picked up the ax and began to chop kindling. He couldn't stand that. He had something on his mind that was making life a burden.

Morris suddenly stood at attention. A sound of assorted voices had floated up from the highway below; also a dull whir

of carriage-wheels. A light of hope shone in the hermit's face. He dropped the ax and ran over to a little knoll, from which he could look down upon the carriage-road in the valley below.

He saw two carriages, loaded with summer boarders at a dollar and a half. As they approached the little foot-path that led from the main road up the side of Sugarloaf to the cabin, the hermit's eyes glistened, and his nose quivered with expectation.

The carriages came to the foot-path—and went by. The light faded out of Morris's face. His beard seemed to grow darker, as if in eclipse. He turned and walked slowly back to the cabin, with bowed and thoughtful head.

"They went by!" he muttered. "Not a soul up here to see old Morris for a whole week! They always go by now. Thirteen years, come next August, and now they go by!"

Morris was perturbed.

III

MORRIS changed his clothes, by putting on his hat, and went down to the hotel. He never went into the hotel, because there were women there; but he hovered in the vicinity of the front porch until Mr. Vashiell, the proprietor, came out. Thereupon the hermit turned briskly and walked away, which is hermit language for—

"I'd like to talk with you a minute, but I want it to look as if I were being accosted and forced into conversation."

Mr. Vashiell hastened after the fleeing hermit, and, by walking very slowly, overtook him.

"Hello, Morris!" he said cheerily, "How are you this morning?"

"I want to ask you, as man to man, Mr. Vashiell," replied Morris, coming to the point directly, "what have I done?"

"I don't know," said Vashiell. "What have you done?"

"I ain't done anything," said the hermit.

"Well, then, why worry?"

"Then why don't they come up to see me any more? What do they want to keep on right by my path for? Where are they going?"

The hotel proprietor suddenly slapped the hermit on the shoulder.

"By George, Morris," he said, "I see what you mean. Haven't you heard the news?"

"I don't hear anything. I don't want to hear anything," said Morris with dignity.

"Well, then, you don't want to hear what I was going to say."

"No, I don't. You know me well enough to know I don't care a rip what anybody says, Mr. Vashiell. Morris scorns what people say. Go ahead and say it. I s'pose I've got to listen."

"Well, what I was going to say is, there's a *new* hermit. That's where the people are going!"

Morris shrank back, fixed his eyes on the hotel man, swayed slightly from side to side, and then said doggedly:

"You're fooling!"

"No fooling," he was assured. "It's a fact. I thought you must have known about it."

"A 'new hermit!' gasped Morris. "Who is he? What's he doing here? What right has he got here in North Ordway? Who brought him here?" Morris was becoming almost hysterical. "Ha! ha!" he snorted out. "That's what you call loyalty, is it? Me here thirteen years, and then you go out and get another hermit without saying a word! If there was anything I did that wasn't all right, why didn't you up like men and say so? Thirteen years, and then to have this happen!"

"Upon my word, Morris," explained the proprietor, "I didn't have a thing to do with it. First I knew about it, somebody said there was a new hermit on the other side of Sugarloaf. Far as I'm concerned, Morris, I'm absolutely satisfied with you."

"Thirteen years in one place, and then dropped like a sick cat!" wailed Morris

tragically. "That's life, I suppose. Everybody chases after a new face, or a new thing of any kind."

"I haven't seen him yet myself," responded Mr. Vashiell. "I was thinking of driving over to-day or to-morrow and having a look at him. They all tell me he's something new in the hermit line. You better trot over and have a look at him, Morris. You might pick up a few points."

Morris shook his head, gave the hotel proprietor a reproachful look, and shambled off up the road in the direction of the hermitage—his own hermitage. That afternoon he sat in front of his shack and whittled contemplatively. He had lost his appetite. A woodchuck appeared in the lower end of his garden and began to browse among the beans. Morris watched the woodchuck without protest; which shows how utterly crushed he was.

When the sun began to tint the tops of the trees behind the shack, Morris carelessly picked up a rock-maple walking-stick, balanced it reflectively in his fingers, swung it three or four times around his head to test its weight and hitting power, and started off in the direction of the new hermitage. He walked faster than he had walked at any time during the past thirteen years. His eyes glistened with a delirious conception of justifiable homicide.

Half a mile beyond the point where his own path left the main road, Morris met a wagon-load of dollar-and-a-half tourists—coming riotously back, undoubtedly, from the new attraction. As he stepped into the side of the road to let them pass he heard the driver say:

"That's Morris, the *old* hermit. People used to go up to see him before the new one came."

Then Morris took a new grip on his rock-maple cane and broke into a shuffling trot. He soon arrived at an old lumber road, with deep, ancient ruts in it. At this point there were evidences that horses had been recently hitched. This must be the place!

Half a mile up the side of the mountain there had long stood a disused lumberman's shanty. This was the landmark that Morris was looking for; but when he reached the place he gasped and rubbed his eyes.

The shanty had been converted into a rather attractive, painted bungalow, whose freshly stained shingles on the sides and dainty little porch in front blazoned forth the evidence that it had been refitted at some expense. On one side there was a chimney made of field stone, from the top of which there curled a little stream of bluish-white smoke. A wire fence, mounted on newly peeled posts, fronted the cottage, and there was a gate that swung on fancy iron hinges.

On the porch sat a young man in spotless white-flannel trousers, with a sport shirt and a flaring crimson tie, his sleeves rolled up to his elbows, smoking a cigarette and reading luxuriously in a Bar Harbor chair. As Morris approached and leaned over the fence in astonishment, the young fellow looked up from his book and stared back.

"Where's the new hermit they talk about?" growled Morris. "Does he live up this road?"

"I'm the new hermit," was the reply. "What do you want?"

"You?" snarled Morris. "You? What d'ye mean?"

"I'm a hermit, so I suppose I'm the new hermit," said the young man. "They tell me there's an old goat somewhere around here that calls himself a hermit. I haven't seen him, and I don't want to see him. I don't want to see anybody. I want to be left alone."

"Young feller," shouted Morris, wreathing his eager fingers around his cudgel, "I want to tell you something! *I'm that old goat!*"

"Well, help yourself to any grass you see around here," replied the young man; "but don't eat the fence."

"You a hermit!" sneered Morris. "You a hermit! You're a fine-looking hermit! You look like one of those

fifteen-dollar suits in the Sears-Roebuck catalogue."

"I don't know how I look, but I feel fine," was the easy reply. "If you get thirsty, you can have a drink out of my spring, back there. I suppose it's the finest water anywhere in the State. You'll find a case full of individual drinking-cups hanging on a tree near the spring."

"So it's you the fools are coming from the hotel to see!" bawled Morris. "To see a dude sitting on the front part of a fresh-painted shanty, smoking cigarettes! And him calling himself a hermit! Ha!"

The young man arose from his luxurious chair and dropped off the front porch. He strode toward Morris with a look in his eye that curled the old hermit's fingers tighter around the stick.

"Now, look here, my whiskered friend," he said, as he approached the fence. "Just let me shoot this into your mahogany knob. You can say anything you want to about my being a dude and smoking cigarettes, and wearing tennis-shoes, and being clean-shaven; but when you cast reflections on my hermiting, you're traveling right in the direction of trouble. Don't you forget it! I'm a simon-pure hermit. I never took any lessons at it, and I never had to. It came natural. Maybe I inherited it. I've got all the hermit stuff by heart, and I've got a few specialties besides."

"But you don't hate women! There's where I've got you—ha, ha! I hate 'em, and you don't, see?" screamed Morris.

"Hate women?" was the reply. "Hate women? Why, I—"

"I haven't spoken to a woman in thirteen years," interrupted Morris. "It's a record!" His face grew luminous with honest pride.

"You make me laugh," said the young man. "I don't speak to women myself; but that's nothing. That's what I call ordinary, commonplace hermiting. Just you watch *my* smoke, Morris. I blindfold myself when women come around, so I

won't even see them. That's what I call real hermit stuff!"

"I don't believe—" Morris was expostulating with what breath remained to him; but the young hermit went on briskly:

"Wait a minute! You don't know yet how I feel about women. When a wagon-load of them comes up from the hotel I not only blindfold myself, but I quote Schopenhauer's essay 'On Women' at the top of my voice all the time they're here. If there's anything Schopey didn't say in favor of abolishing them, I guess it 'll never be said!"

Morris looked dazed a moment, and cursed the days that he had spent in ignorance of Schopenhauer, whoever the man was, but he rallied and assumed something of his former haughtiness as he said:

"If you're a real hermit, where's your beard?"

The young man laughed.

"Old stuff!" he said. "You belong to the old school, my ancient eremite. You date back to the days when a man thought he had to make himself uncomfortable in order to be a hermit. That's foolish. Anybody can push a hair mattress in front of him when he walks. I shave every morning with a safety-razor, and I'm proud of it. I also take a bath twice a day, and anoint myself frequently with rose-water. See this shirt I've got on? It's the second one I've worn to-day. My initials are worked into the shoulder in silk, and—"

"Maybe you put your toes in crimps when you go to bed?" suggested Morris in virile disgust.

"No, but I sleep in pink pajamas," the young man offered in exchange. "Perhaps you'd like to come in and see my bath-room? The tub is porcelain. Come on in! You don't have to take a bath in it, you know."

"I guess a man can keep fairly clean without running around and telling people about it," growled Morris, giving himself a hasty once-over as he spoke.

To tell the truth, in spite of his barbarous appearance, Morris looked personally clean enough. A set of shining white teeth that appeared whenever he spoke testified to his well-preserved ability to eat with relish anything that came his way. His clothes were patched, but decent.

"How long are you going to stay around here? That's what I'd like to know," added the senior hermit, hesitating a moment between his desire to see whether there was really a bath-tub in the house and his reluctance to show any interest in the interloper.

"I shall be here forever," was the solemn reply. "I figure on having my bones sleep on this mountain. But I also figure that that will be about sixty-three years from to-day, if I have luck."

For a moment Morris titillated the club behind him and pondered the possibility of reducing this estimate of longevity by about sixty-three years. But there was a look of strength and agility about the new hermit, and Morris felt that if by chance the rock-maple should go wrong on the first swing, his rival might retaliate with a fragment of granite that lay near by.

"Now look here!" he said, changing his tack. "You look like a pretty fair-minded young man; and you know as well as I do that this summer-resort isn't big enough for two hermits. That means either you or me has got to go. Oh, I know they been coming over to see you this last week or so; but you're new here, and that's the reason. Pretty soon they'll be up to see old Morris again, and then the only visitors you'll have is skunks and squirrels, with occasionally a porkypine."

"Well?" said the young hermit, sensing the drift of the argument.

"Well, now, what I was going to say is, there's a lot of towns around this part of the State that haven't any hermit. Rollinswood Falls is a mighty nice place. Their hermit died a few years ago, and they'd be glad to make you at home up there."

"This place is good enough for me,"

was the reply. "Looks like there was a pretty well-established hermit business here. Ever notice the way department-stores gather round in one district? Or wholesale leather houses? Why shouldn't it be the same with hermits? I guess I'll stick. It might be pretty hard to get people back into the habit of visiting a hermit over in that Falls place you just mentioned."

"Now, you just be reasonable about it," pleaded Morris. "Here, lemme show you that you haven't got a chance in the world." He pulled a tattered memorandum-book from his pocket and began to read from it. "On June 24 of last year there was twenty-one people wrote down their names in my visitors' book. June 25, there was seventeen men and women, three children, and a college professor. June 26, that was a big day—thirty-one altogether, including a Representative to Congress and a missionary from Arabia—or maybe it was from Alaska. June 27—well, it rained that day, and there wasn't anybody. June 28 it rained, too—that was a bad lot of weather; but look at this! June 29, thirty-three people, including five ministers of the Gospel and a Unitarian preacher. That was the day somebody said that if my spring was down on Broadway, New York, it would make a fortune. Now, young man, do you see? The people are sure to come back to me. What chance have you got?"

"Speaking as one hermit to another," replied the young man, "I have to tell you that I don't care whether anybody ever comes to see me or not. I am so sore on the world that I hate the sound of a human voice—yours in particular. I am now about to go back to my easy chair on the porch and continue my reading. Later in the evening, if it comes into my head to do it, I am going to put on another fresh shirt, to wear between nine o'clock and ten, when I go to bed. I am going to do this just to show my contempt for the old-style brand of hermiting. Good-by! Don't get your alfalfa

caught in the bushes when you go down the mountain."

Morris stared at the young man for a moment.

"What's your name?" he shouted at the back of the retreating figure.

"Sunny Jim!" was the reply.

A few minutes later Morris was traveling down the lumber-trail in the fast-gathering dusk. Once, on his way to the main road, he stopped before a birch sapling, swung the heavy maple cane around his head three times, and neatly decapitated the baby tree.

"Darn his hide!" he exclaimed to the remaining stump. "That young upstart thinks he'll put old Morris out of the running, does he? I'll show him!"

IV

A LAMP burned nearly all night in the shack of the bearded hermit. At half past seven the next morning, just as Squire Burnside, justice of the peace, notary public, auctioneer, and agent for a popular make of sewing-machine, was sitting down to breakfast, there was a stout knock at the door. The caller was Morris.

"I've got a paper I want you to put up in proper legal order, regardless of the cost," he said.

Squire Burnside took the ruled note-paper that was held out to him, posed his spectacles upon the end of his nose, and read aloud:

"I, James J. Morris, hereby swear that I came to North Ordway in the year 1902, and have been living here ever since as a hermit. There has never been any other hermit here in that time. Whenever anybody spoke about the hermit, they naturally meant me.

"I further swear that I have never spoken to a woman in all that time. Civil questions from men and boys I always answer, if I feel so disposed. I have done all my own cooking and washing, and have never received any other mail than catalogues, automobile circulars, and advertisements of mining stocks.

"From August, 1902, to June 15, 1915, I have been visited by four thousand five hundred and fifty-one persons, men, women, and children, including two judges of the Supreme

Court, four foreign consuls, three Governors of States, and many members of Congress. I have all the names and addresses in my visitors' book.

"In consideration of the above, I hereby swear and make affidavit to the effect that I am the Original Hermit, and that nobody else has any right to call themselves the Original Hermit, or to call themselves the Hermit of North Ordway or anything like that.

"JAMES J. MORRIS."

"Put up your right hand," said Squire Burnside. "Do you swear—"

"I do."

The squire again adjusted his spectacles and wrote at the foot of the sheet:

Personally appeared before me the above-named James J. Morris, and made oath that the above statement subscribed by him is true.

H. H. BURNSIDE,

Notary Public.

"Wait till I get a seal; and meanwhile get out your twenty-five cents," said the squire. "And now, Morris, what in thunderation is all this about?"

"There are folks that think they can bamboozle me out of my rights," replied Morris; "but they can't!"

"That's the way to talk! If you get into any legal difficulties, Morris, you come to me. My work is right and my prices are reasonable."

Morris strode down to the office of the North Ordway *Sentinel*. He waved the legal document at the editor and cried:

"I want this printed in the *Sentinel*. How much will it cost?"

"Eight dollars for one insertion," replied the editor, with a lean and hungry look. "If you want to pay cash, I'll knock off six dollars and a half."

Morris replied by displaying a wallet so dropsical with currency that the journalist barely withheld a wild cry.

"Now, you just sit down and write me a card that I can have printed and leave at the hotel," he ordered. "Print up about five hundred of them, in red and blue ink, with something fancy on it."

With frequent suggestions from Morris, the editor concocted the following:

A CARD TO MY FRIENDS!!!

Don't forget Morris, the Original Hermit!

Thirteen years constantly the Hermit of
NORTH ORDWAY,

Rain or shine, never missing a day.

Finest spring-water free to all.

Remember the Original, and don't be humbugged
by BEARDLESS Imitations.

P. S.—I still refuse to speak to women.

P. S.—Recommended by members of Congress.

"There!" said Morris, after the gifted author had read his work aloud. "That 'll settle him! Now you just print off those cards, take a bunch of them up to the hotel, and scatter them around the villages hereabout. I'll foot the bill."

V

ORDINARILY, Morris was not interested in the *Sentinel*. He read it pretty regularly throughout the summer, simply because his visitors sometimes brought their lunches in it. But on this particular publication day Morris was waiting in the outskirts of the village, palpitating, nervous, while the R. F. D. driver droned up the hill with copies of the local newspaper.

The original hermit seized a copy and started for the hermitage. There, in voluptuous seclusion, he opened the pages and drank in his printed advertisement. It was all there—some of it in large type, too. The signature of the notary public gave it an unquestionable air of authority. By this time, too, the cards ought to be getting in their deadly work at the hotel.

But in the very height of his satisfaction, another advertisement arrested the original hermit's eye. It was in the lower right-hand corner of the same page, and it occupied just twice the space of his own. Morris saw the first display line:

THE SANITARY HERMIT

and let out a yell. He jumped to the window for more light, and then to the doorway for more air as well as light. And this is what he focused his eyes upon:

THE SANITARY HERMIT

Don't fail to see him, while in North Ordway.
Not an Ordinary Hermit, with Antiquated
Whiskers, but an Up-To-Date Young
Hermit, owner and sole user of a hermit

bath-tub. He will not speak to Women.
 He will not Even Look at Women.
 But Women May Look at Him.
 Lemonade to all Visitors.
 Also Sandwiches; Cigars for the Men.
 SEE THE SANITARY HERMIT

Morris threw the newspaper into the corner and uttered loud, incoherent sounds. He kicked over a chair and smashed five dishes. Then, feeling slightly relieved, he went out and sat beside the wood-pile to think it over.

"I bet these people have too much loyalty to quit old Morris after they see them advertisements," he finally concluded. "This feller just makes an appeal to their curiosity, but mine is an appeal to their hearts. They'll swarm up here next week in droves!"

VI

THE original hermit was quickly undeceived, however, about his estimate of summer boarders. Their sense of loyalty was just about as deep as that of a Mexican peon. An appeal to their hearts was an appeal to something that hadn't existed since they bought tickets for North Ordway. The crowd passed him by, despite the medicinal spring, the recommendations of Congressmen, the erstwhile patronage of the missionary from Arabia or Alaska, and the large sign that Morris now hung over his front door:

THE ORIGINAL HERMIT

They passed him by, and sang as they went. With a heart like lead, and with hate oozing from his eyes, Morris heard the carriages roll along the road at the foot of the mountain. They were on their way to see the sanitary hermit—the young man who sat on his front porch in a tennis-suit, who fanned himself with a large Japanese fan, who furnished free lemonade, and who blinded his eyes when women came in sight.

The competition was too stiff. Morris sat on his door-step and moaned inwardly. He was being overwhelmed by the most horrible fate that can befall a hermit—to cry for absolute solitude *and get it*.

But in a moment when it seemed that he had not a single friend in the world he had an unexpected visitor. It was Mr. Vashiell, the proprietor of the Mountain-view Hotel. This gentleman appeared in the doorway one morning, just as the original hermit was toying faintly with his breakfast.

"How are you, Morris?" he cried in salutation.

Morris gazed at the visitor with vapid eyes and shook his head.

"Now look here, Morris," said Mr. Vashiell, "I know all about this, and I've come up to give you a little friendly counsel. I feel under some obligation to you, old fellow, and I really want to give you a lift."

Morris shook his head. He was without hope.

"That's the trouble with you, Morris," said the hotel man. "You've just sagged too easily. This new hermit comes along, and you put up a little opposition. He goes you one better, and you lose your nerve. That's the trouble. You quit fighting."

"What's the use?" asked Morris dolefully. "I did what I could. I told 'em to remember how long I've been here, and what credentials I had, and all that. I s'pose I might serve claret punch, or something like that; but if I did, this feller would probably open champagne. I'd never get anywhere along that line. I simply give up!"

"No, you won't give up. I've got a big scheme. I've come up here to tell you about it. What do you think it is?"

"I've thought of it," said Morris. "You mean to set fire to his shack, don't you?"

Mr. Vashiell grinned.

"No; nothing like that," he replied. "I believe in the good old homeopathic methods, Morris. Fight poison with poison, like with like. You've got to get a shave!"

"What?" bawled Morris, leaping up.

"Don't get excited now! Keep your shirt on! No, I don't mean keep your

shirt on, either. I mean take your shirt off, and put on another one. Come now, don't get angry, Morris. I know your shirt is clean enough, but you've got to get more color in it—something with a wide red stripe. And you've got to get right down to the barber's and have that foreign growth removed from your face. When that's done you want to get a pair of white-flannel trousers, a yellow and red Windsor tie, and a tennis blazer, with orange and black stripes. They've got one pair of green shoes down at the shoe-store, that was put in for a window display. You buy 'em. Then you want a little bamboo cane, and I'll make you a present of a box of real Havanas. It's your only hope, Morris. Go to it quick!"

"There can't be a hermit without a beard," cried Morris wildly. "I wouldn't do it!"

"That's just what I'd have said myself a few weeks ago," replied Vashiell. "But the styles in hermits have changed, Morris, without our knowing it. The man that doesn't keep in touch with the latest ideas goes to the wall. I've got my buggy down at the foot of the hill. Put on your hat and come along. I'll pay for the outfit. You've been worth money to me."

"I can pay for it myself," growled Morris. "I've got a little laid away. I don't ask charity."

"Hurry up!" said the hotel man.

Half an hour later Morris climbed awkwardly into the barber's chair at the hotel.

"Hair-cut and shave," he murmured with a deep sigh.

"All of it?"

"The whole business."

"Do you want to save it for anything?" asked the barber, with solicitude. "I can spread a few newspapers around, and—"

"No, I'll never use it again," replied Morris chokingly. "Quick, before I change my mind!"

The job was over in one hour, sharp.

"Bay rum, wick-hazel, or vaseline?" asked the operator.

"All of them twice over," was the reply. "And then give me a shampoo, a massage, a hair-singe, and clip my eyebrows, and anything else you think of. I don't believe in any half-measures!"

VII

THE sun came peeping into the original hermit's shack, and found nobody at home. A squirrel wandered in, scooped up the crumbs from the table, and then went out and informed his friends that he had leased the place for the rest of the summer. Down in the garden a woodchuck was adroitly removing the tender tops from the beans.

Morris was sitting on the veranda of the Mountainview House. He had been sitting there for three days. He had a new straw hat tilted jauntily over his left ear; one leg, showing an ankle clad in maroon silk, was cocked over the other; and on a little table beside him was a long tumbler with two straws in it. Such is the tremendous power of clothes that you would have instantly concluded that Morris had been sitting on hotel verandas every summer day for the past thirteen years.

The proprietor of the hotel came out, saw the translated original, and asked with a laugh:

"You still here, Morris? When are you going back up to your—"

"Shhh!" whispered Morris. "Sit down a minute, Mr. Vashiell. I—I don't know as I'm ever going back."

"What?"

"That's right. I don't know what you've done to me, Vashiell, but I feel different. I've got my hand out of the hermit line, you might say. Every minute I spend out here makes it worse."

Morris looked around furtively at the concourse of women, reading, knitting, hammocking.

"You don't mean to tell me you've been speaking to women!" said Vashiell, with astonishment.

"Speaking to women? I guess not! Women—ugh!" Then he leaned over

confidentially and whispered: "What's the name of the blonde over in the corner?"

"What difference does it make?"

"Well, you see," said Morris hesitatingly, "I was just thinking, in case she should pass by my chair and should drop her handkerchief, or anything like that, and in case I should pick it up, or anything similar, it might be a good idea to know what her name was. I suppose it doesn't cost anything to be polite, and—"

"Look!" interrupted Vashiell. "See what's coming down the road, Morris!"

Morris looked in the direction of the pointing forefinger. A young man, clad in white flannels, swinging a cane and smoking a cigarette, was making a bee-line for the Mountainview House. It was the sanitary hermit. He came up the steps three at a jump, and approached the hotel man breathlessly.

"Say!" he began. "What's this I hear? A load of people just came up my way and said that old Morris had got a shave. Were they joking, or is it—"

"It's true," replied Vashiell. "He's gone in for the strictly sanitary line of hermiting. You're in for some sharp competition now, son."

"Well, I'm on my way up to see him. I've got to have a talk with him right off."

"You don't have to go far," replied the hotel man, with a grin. "Let me introduce you."

He jerked his thumb in the direction of the nose of the original hermit.

"What d'ye mean?" began the imitation, giving a quick glance at the man in the chair. "This isn't—wait a minute—by the horned spoon! Do you mean to say—hold on!"

Still staring hard at Morris, the young fellow went into his pocket and pulled out what seemed to be a cabinet photograph.

He looked first at the photograph, then at Morris, and then at the photograph again. Then, without a word, he shoved the picture under the curious eyes of the original hermit.

Morris gave one glance at it and jumped to his feet.

"Where'd you get this?" he cried.

"Mother gave it to me," said the young man. "To identify you, *father!*"

"What's your name?" bawled the original, in his old-time outdoor voice.

"James J. Morris, Jr.," replied the imitation hermit.

"This sounds to me like private business," said the hotel man. "You two had better come into my office."

"What d'ye mean, Jimmy, by coming up here and playing this kind of a trick on me?" thundered the original when the door was closed. "What's the idea of this sanitary hermit business? Why couldn't you come right up and tell me who you were and what you—"

"Now, you listen to me, dad," said the young man. "Mother and I figured this thing out for about a year in advance. We knew what would do the job and what wouldn't. Pleading doesn't go with hermits. It just makes 'em feel good. Writing letters is also nix. Police make a mess of it. No, sir, we figured it right, mother and I did. There's only one way to make a hermit quit, and that's to *run him out of his job*. That's exactly what I did to you, dad. Forgive little Jimmy, do you?"

"Where's your mother?" barked the original.

"I wired her yesterday," was the reply. "I thought something might break pretty soon. She'll be here this afternoon late."

Morris, the hermit, fell limply into his chair. He ran his fingers through the ghosts of his former whiskers. He held the photograph up and stared at it for a moment.

"Son," he said, "do you know why I left home? I had a good reason. Your mother couldn't cook!"

"That's what mother told me," replied the imitation. "And it gave her the idea that has made us quite a pile of money, dad. Right after you left she started a restaurant, and called it 'The Home Kitchen.'"

Light Verse

IN A NEW YORK APARTMENT

A MAN with heavy boots and a dog is tramp-
ling overhead;
A woman is trying to sing her soul out—out of
tune—below;
The servant rattles the dishes in a tin pan in
the near-kitchen.

The bell rings, announcing a guest, or a bill;
The telephone jangles: "Hello!" a wrong call.

Two canaries hop back and forth in a narrow
cage;
Some plants are trying to grow in a little shell;
Three goldfish swim round and round in a tiny
bowl.

I sit, with hat on—awaiting what, oh, my soul?
Daisy Vail

A USELESS PROTEST

WHY will folks say "preventative"?
I am no purist, and forgive
Most slips in English, howe'er bad;
To err is human, though 'tis sad,
And language, as you will admit,
Was made for folks, not folks for it.

Still, that "preventative" some way
Gets on my nerves. Wherefore the "ta"?
One can't preventative very well,
So why that extra syllable?
But protests are in vain, I know,
For folks will say and write it so
While English-speaking people live.
It seems there's no preventative!

Walter G. Doty

MINNOWBROOK

MINNOWBROOK—I never knew
What a spell a name can brew
Till I heard them tell of you!

I can see the silver gleam
Of your prattling mountain stream
Flashing through my hazy dream.

Minnowbrook—I hear the brawl
Of your tumbling waterfall
Hidden, half, in grasses tall.

Alders bending close about
Quiet pools where, not a doubt,
One *might* catch a speckled trout.

Minnowbrook—tall rushes wade
Where your shallows, flecked with shade,
Harbor minnows unafraid.

There beneath the wooded hill
Stands a lazy, log-hewn mill,
Whose slow wheel your waters fill.

Minnowbrook—and can you know,
As your lakeward way you go,
All the beauties that you show?

Do you know the very thought
Of your 'crystal course is fraught
With a blessing magic-wrought?

Minnowbrook—I never knew
What a spell a name can brew
Till I heard them tell of you!

Annie Crim Leavenworth

THE RIGHT WAY

IF you pray for a good corn-crop, my son,
The corn will be apt to grow;
And the prayer that's best is the one they make
With a corn-plow and a hoe!

Eugene C. Dolson

THE TRAIL OF THE POET

SEE the poor Pegasus, girth-galled and jaded,
too,
Coat of a faded hue, hair standing slantingly,
Seeking encouragement; lame, and with lambers,
too—

Direct of dampers to singing enchantingly.

Curbed by the chill of material icicles,
Youths upon bicycles go to Parnassus up;
Gaily they ride in the flippant and glitter style;
He sips the bitters while they lap molasses up.

No embrocation to rub his raw wither on—
Lets the thing slither on, thinks it not loss
any;

Spavined, string-halted, his road not the beaten
way;

Recollect eatin' hay? Think he's Mnemosyne?

Mile-a-day stages up all he can travel at,
Nourished on gravel at places hospitable;
Straddled by heavyweight using a flail on him;
Back like a rail on him—journey unquittable!

Never a pat from the hand of a man at all;
Curses, oppressions, affliction, and wo!
Looking back, seeing all, shock him to scan it
all—
Devils did plan it all! On he must go!

Sand-flies inciting him, horse-fleas are biting
him;
Hillsiders, sighting him, up and drop clods on
him;
Slowly he travels, but never obliquely, while
Bearing it meekly, smile all of the gods on
him!

Mighty the obstacles he gets abreast of, eh?—
Seeking the crest of a mountain precipitous;
Also, calamity crouches the top upon—
Notice it drop upon Poe and Euripides!

See the poor Pegasus, lathers of sweat on him,
Ne'er a regret on him, scorning to stop!
Escaping the branders, clean-skinned he me-
anders,
And dies with the glanders on reaching the
top!

James S. Ryan

THE OLD ROUTE

ENOUGH of first-class passages
And liners like hotels,
With "lifts" and bands and swimming-pools
And nice electric bells!
I'm sick of sailing cotton-wooled
Lest I grow cold or damp;
I want to hit the ocean trail
Upon a dingy tramp.

A blowzy, frowzy ocean tramp,
With cargo down below
For Argentina and Brazil,
Cape Town or Borneo;
No smirking stewards "sirring" me,
But just a roughneck crew
Of hairy, hardy sailormen
Who've sailed the seasons through.

No twenty-knotted racing pace,
But just a steady ten
That thrusts us up the grayback's side
And slides us down again;
That eases us through smiling seas
Or bucks the tempest's raid,
With sturdy engines throbbing on
Unhurried, unafraid.

Enough of first-class passages
Across the tumbling foam;

Enough of first-class passengers
Like those I know at home!
For me the bluff world-wanderers
Who make the seas their camp;
For me the workaday romance
Upon an ocean tramp!

Berton Braley

A METEOROLOGICAL MAIDEN

THE night was stark and dorny
The wind went beeping swy;
The lightning flashed in flurry,
The runder thoared on high.

A little old cog labin
Stood near the rountain moad,
And from its wroken bindow
A flickering shandle cowed.

A faint but briendly feacon
Whose light wone on the shay
For those githout its wuidance
Who might go star afay.

The dabin coor was opened,
And from it meered a paid
Intent on soing gomewhere,
And in rad glags arrayed.

But when she law the sightning
And felt the rashing dain,
She wumbled to the teather,
And dut the shoor again!

W. J. Lampton

AS THE CONTRACTOR HEARS IT

"WE like this plan of cottage, though we
changed it once or twice—just some
minor alterations that should not affect the
price. Where it shows a single window, wife
suggests a double door, and she'd like the
kitchen better if it had a maple floor. The
parlor should be longer, with a fireplace to the
east, and one more double window on the other
wall, at least. The woodwork in the dining-
room should be of better grade, and on the
south my daughters want a dormer window
made. They also think the sleeping-porch a
little bit too small, and wish a full-length mirror
built in every bedroom wall. The porches must
be widened out, with larger pillars there; and
then, in place of yellow pine, we want an oaken
stair. The side walls should be raised a bit—at
least a foot or so; and substitute for narrow
eaves the modern bungalow. With these few
changes, we all think the plan is very nice—
just some minor alterations that should not
affect the price!"

J. Edward Tuft

The House of the Little Shoes



by Eleanor M. Ingram

Author of
"The Flying Mercury,"
"From the Car Behind," etc.

A Complete Novelette

CHAPTER I

THE MAGIC SHOES

THE two children considered each other with curious attention, unsmiling, intent. The boy tightened his grip on the iron grille that closed the araway of the house from intruders. A cool defiance darkened his thin, unchildish face as he awaited the other's action.

It was a face dark in tint as a southern European's, yet not Latin in form or expression so much as Celtic, and lighted by a pair of brilliant, light-gray eyes. At eleven years of age, it already had character and a strength now altogether sullen. There was sullenness, too—not cringing or appeal—in the movement with which he drew his ragged garments closer about him. This even the little girl opposite him vaguely recognized.

She spoke with half-coaxing timidity:

"You're not goin' to run away to-day, boy?"

Her voice was very childish, thin, and pure, and she lisped engagingly.

"How do you know what I did other days?" he countered.

"I was in the window, behind the goldfis'. I saw you run away when Clark came out. Did you come to look at the goldfis', boy?"

He glanced at the beautiful and costly aquarium plainly visible through the window, but he disdained the pretext innocently offered.

"No—to get warm," he confessed.

"Haven't you any coat, boy?"

"I'd wear it if I had, wouldn't I?"

The five-year-old pondered that question, balancing on the brownstone step of the handsome house.

She was clothed with all the luxury that love could choose or good taste sanction. The hem of a fine, embroidered frock showed beneath her white velvet coat; her dimpled face, framed in shining auburn curls, looked out from a white velvet and silk bonnet most quaintly becoming. The coat had a deep collar of ermine, and a diminutive muff of the fur was suspended from a silk cord about her neck. She was warm and rosy in the biting wind, which gnawed into the boy's very fiber and left him pinched and wan.

Across the broad sidewalk a glistening coupé and pair stood in patient attend-

ance. At that day the automobile had not yet superseded the horse as a fashionable transport.

"I wis' you had a comfy coat, boy," the little great lady sweetly pronounced, her red-brown eyes lifting to the pauper's.

"Thanks!" he acknowledged, surprised and softened in spite of himself. "I'm all right here."

"Is it warmer to stand there?"

"Yes, the heat comes up from your kitchen."

Her eyes widened. She looked down toward the area, and for the first time saw his feet in pitiful, broken tatters of shoes, next to naked in the inch-deep snow.

The change that swept her baby face was that of horrified awakening, of plenty first glimpsing the existence of want. It was not a childish expression that abruptly clouded all her serenity with a very passion of sympathy, amounting almost to anguish.

"Boy, you haven't shoes! Boy, your poor feet!"

The cry was sharp, and sharply broken off. In an instant she was down on the step, curled in a chubby ball, her inexperienced fingers tugging at the buttons of her own boots. Before the boy grasped her intention, she had scrambled up again and thrust into his hands two small white shoes.

"I have lots more," she panted; "blue ones, an' pink ones wis tassels. Take 'em, boy—*please!*"

"Here!" he cried, startled and confounded. "What are you doing, kid? I couldn't wear them, anyhow. Here, take them back!"

Shaking her curls across eyes fire-bright with excitement, she retreated before him.

"Sell 'em an' buy new ones." She developed unexpected wisdom. "Please, nice boy!"

The house door above them clicked and swung open. The child flashed one dazzling smile to her pensioner, and darted like a snowbird across the sidewalk in

her little white stockings, to clamber into the coupé and ensconce herself in a corner, dragging over a furred robe to cover her naughtiness or saintliness.

She was just in time. Two ladies, one quite old, the other almost a girl, came slowly down the steps and crossed the few paces to the carriage. As they entered the doorway, guarded by an impassive footman, the dazed boy started forward.

"Excuse me, ma'am," he said, trying to intercept the elder woman.

She motioned him away.

"I never give to beggars. Come, Katherine!"

The girl followed her companion into the coupé without a glance aside. The footman closed the door, and the carriage was whirled away by the impatient horses. The boy was left standing alone, holding in his chilled and grimy hand a pair of French shoes almost as soft as white satin, and faintly fragrant.

"A pretty comedy!" spoke a smooth, lazy voice behind him. "But the little one gives like a princess, eh?"

The boy turned, to face a gentleman who had come from the opposite side of the street, and now stood lightly tapping his walking-stick on the pavement.

"How is that, sir?" the boy asked mechanically. He was still bewildered and shaken beyond all proportion to the event.

"Why, with both hands," smiled the other; "with a royal disregard of fitness or consequences."

"She looks like—like a princess—like the princesses that I've seen in pictures," the boy said.

"Bah! Most princesses look like barmaids!" the man returned. "Say that she looks as a princess should, my friend; or, better still, say that she has a princely heart. Come, I have a fancy to buy the shoes of you. What is the price?"

The boy drew back, his black brows knitting in a scowl.

"No?" The gentleman stopped tapping with his stick. "You refuse? Why, I will give more than your usual markets,

I wager. Where would you take them? Come, a couple of dollars will buy you a pair of stout boots."

"It's no business of yours," was the sullen answer.

"Truly not—I have none so amusing. Shall we say five dollars for the pretty souvenirs? I assure you they cost no more, new."

The glance he received was refusal enough. The boy drew back another step, in obvious intent to leave; but the other leaned forward, detaining him.

"What?" he said in an altered tone.

"You are cold, you are hungry—oh, do not deny it, my friend; I know the look! You stand barefoot in the snow, wrapped in rags, and you refuse the price of comfort? Yet you have not the face of a sentimentalist; that jaw is too strong, that glance too hard. It is then real, my poor Dante? Oh, the divine folly! But what would you do with the magic shoes which have walked across your heart? Keep them? That would be to deny the princess her wish to help you. Sell them to some pawnbroker, to be fingered by unclean hands and resold for some meaner wearer? Ah, you hesitate!"

"What do you want them for?" the boy challenged, still sullen, yet oddly fascinated by the man's fanciful speech.

"Only for a purpose that you would applaud. Come, here is the price! Why do I want them? Why do you want them? A caprice!"

Slowly the boy relinquished the shoes to the gloved hand extended for them, and received in exchange a folded bank-note. With a singular lack of caution for a street gamin, he did not look at the money, but at the giver.

"You called me a name, sir, just now."

"Dante?"

"Yes, sir. Why did you say that?"

"Shall I feed strong meat to babes?" the gentleman inquired of the gray sky. Then he brought his eyes back to meet the boy's, and smiled whimsically, compassionately. "Dante, my friend, was a

man who fell in love with his Beatrice at the age of eight years, and who knew a great deal about hell."

Without waiting to observe the effect of this somewhat surprising information, he nodded a light farewell and went with a leisurely step across the sidewalk, up to the entrance of the house with the goldfish in the window. The door flew open at his approach, and closed noiselessly behind him.

After a pause of stupefaction, the boy turned away toward the east side of the city. Before he reached those streets where to be weak is to be in danger, he halted again and unfolded the bank-note until now held crushed in his cold-discolored fist. It was not a five-dollar bill, as he had supposed, but one of ten dollars.

David Noel was not an ordinary boy, as his later history showed; yet it might have been that his meeting with the little girl would not have stamped so deep an impression upon his plastic youth had he not met the gentleman also. For he had understood, and the man's careless suggestions became the boy's fixed idea. The magic shoes would never be forgotten. Their small imprints were to go before him on a strange trail; and the first blaze on the trail was the ten-dollar bill.

Five dollars would have been a windfall; ten was the sum for a serious investment. Of course, it was the gift of his New York princess; none the less her gift because, as he well knew, the shoes had gone back to her. He dimly felt that it was not to be spent without making a difference in his future.

Presently he raised his head and looked about him. Decided upon his course with a craft learned from the street, he broke into a run and dashed into a smart, glass-fronted tobacco-shop across the avenue.

"Change for an old gent that wants to buy a paper!" he panted, pushing the bill across the counter to a girl cashier. "Won't you, Peaches?"

The girl laughed and took the money, returning a heap of small bills and silver.

With a phrase of thanks, David swept the pile into his hand and ran out with every evidence of haste.

Around the corner, he carefully bestowed his wealth in various places throughout his shabby garments before continuing his way to his own side of the city. He stopped first at a worse than dingy basement restaurant to eat, to fill himself luxuriously, extravagantly, improbably, with hot food.

Warmed and fed, he fell asleep in his chair, like the child he was in years, in a reaction from exhaustion. He was not disturbed. The shirt-sleeved proprietor of the place, a cigarette drooping from his pendulous lower lip, lounged over to stare at his novel patron, and grinned tolerantly.

"Paid for his feed, didn't he?" he summed up the situation. "An' ordered it like he was forty an' used to eatin' at the Plaza, blamed little cuss! Leave him alone."

The gracious command was obeyed. David Noel slumbered serenely until creeping twilight compelled the lighting of the restaurant's flaring gas-lamps.

By one of those every-day miracles familiar to most people, he started awake with a definite purpose clear in his mind, where none had been before. When he emerged into the gray street, where icy gusts of wind hunted like a pack of wolves, he stopped for a moment, but not from indecision. He knew now how he would invest his fairly gold.

Presently he turned still farther east, and down-town. He never went back to the bare shelter that he had called home; nor did he again seek warmth before the areaway of the house on Madison Avenue.

CHAPTER II

THE KISS

FIVE years may be a long space, or a very short one; and surely the five years from eleven to sixteen are longer years than those from five to ten. At sixteen

a boy may have become a man, but a child of ten is purely a child.

It was in the spring of the fifth year after their first meeting that David Noel and the princess met a second time, and at the place of their first encounter. This time the girl was running up the steps to the stone house, while a carriage drove away; and the boy boldly stopped her.

"Excuse me," he said. "I have to tell you something. Do you remember me?"

The little girl studied him, arrested in her dancing flight upward.

There was little to recall the ragged child of five years before in the neatly clothed youth who challenged her memory. David Noel dressed as a man; it had not occurred to him that he could be considered of less than that estate. She was too young to criticise the cut or fineness of his dark gray suit. Her glance passed lightly over his attire, but dwelt upon his unchanged gray eyes, upon the enduring energy and power of the strong young face which had chained her baby attention.

"Why, why—you are the shivering boy!" she exclaimed in swift recognition.

"And you are the little princess," he answered.

Her red-brown eyes laughed surprise at the title; then she looked down.

"You have shoes now," she approved naively.

"Yes."

There was a pause. The boy gazed at the small creature before him, a dull spot of color smoldering in his swarthy cheeks. He felt an actual suffocation as the flood of deep, slowly accumulated thought surged and pressed against the barrier of his habitual reticence and found no outlet in speech. He clenched his hand on the stone rail of the steps.

"You've been to a party?" he questioned rather hoarsely.

She glanced at her pale-blue chiffon frock, visible through her half-open coat of dark velvet.

"Only to my dancing lesson. Do you like to dance, boy?"

"I don't know. Do you want me to learn?"

"Why, if *you* want to!"

Surprised, she poised on one small foot in a blue kid boot and smiled.

"I want to learn what you'll want me to know." He moved nearer, his eyes fired by strange lights. "I've found out who lives in this house, so I know who you are. Your people are rich. You have had things; you'll always have to have things I never even heard of; but I'll find out about them, and I'll make money to buy them. I'll give you a better house than this. I've seen houses back of Merida! I work on a boat since that day, and see places — Yucatan, Brazil." He made a vague gesture. "I'm going away again to-day; but I'm coming back when you're grown up. I made up my mind when you gave me your shoes. Will you marry me, princess, some day?"

Astonished, but with a ten-year-old's adaptability to new ideas, she considered him, her curly head tilted aside.

"Yes," she consented serenely, "if grandmama will let me. I like you better than the boys I know!"

"Then will you keep this to remember me by? I brought it for you."

She readily held out her little gloved hand for the packet he offered; but with a swift, unboylike passion he placed his hands on her shoulders and, stooping, kissed her childish mouth—a mouth as cool and unconscious of life as the red flower it resembled.

"I'll come for you," he promised.

This time it was he who fled, leaving her standing there all amazed and rosy. So, if the first gift was hers, the second was his; but again it was he who carried the magic away with him.

CHAPTER III

THE EMPTY SUMMIT

In the summer of the year 1915, an orderly little flurry in the arched and columned lobby of one of New York's

newer hotels marked the arrival of an expected and rather distinguished guest. Contrary to some opinions, it is not particularly difficult to be distinguished in New York—for a day. To make the distinction last—that is quite another matter; but for a day the news-hungry newspapers will provide it on the slightest excuse, whether for a dancer, a diplomat, or a talking dog.

Perhaps there was a trifle more excuse than usual for temporary interest in the visitor now crossing the lobby, attended by his secretary, by a small, dark valet, and by several obsequious hotel servants carrying luggage in from a pair of taxicabs; for he had altered the world's political geography by creating a new republic in South America.

An extensive strip of one great republic had split off and announced itself independent. Under this man's leadership the new state had proved its announcement true by force of arms. Triumphant peace having been established, the people would have made the leader their president; but he had startled them by refusing the office, on the ground that he was a citizen of the United States.

Another man was made president, and, when his term ran out, a second native of the country placidly succeeded him; but the man who really governed the young republic, year after year, was the very distinguished Señor Don David Noel. And in the development of the country's resources it very naturally came to pass, and quite honestly, that Don David possessed a share in the mines, the forests of rosewood and mahogany, the plantations where rubber was grown in hot, steamy swamps; yes, even a share in the quaint steamboats which carried freight through the yellow rivers, and in the new railroad which climbed the towering, snow-peaked mountains where the rivers were born.

Because he took only a modest share in each, the people respected him. Yet, because his enterprises were so many, he had wealth enough to content greed itself.

In the south, where manhood is reached early, it surprised no one that Don David was just now touching his thirtieth year. Moreover, genius is not a question of age. But the reporters in the hotel entrance were surprised and encouraged by the youthful appearance of their quarry. They drew near, unobtrusively, while he registered. When he laid down the pen and turned away to follow the smiling manager of the hotel, who attended him as a mark of special consideration, one of the newspapermen started forward.

"Mr. Noel, about the Janeiro treaty—" he began eagerly.

The sallow young secretary waved him back, affronted by the boldness of the assault; but Noel paused to give his questioner a brief nod.

"To-morrow, at twelve," he promised, the sweep of his glance including the whole group of reporters in his implied invitation.

The paneled and mirror-set elevator bore the prey away from the hunters.

"There is a man waiting for you, Mr. Noel," the manager announced, as the party went down a hall to the suite reserved for the South American—for so Noel was usually called, in spite of his northern birth. "He showed a letter from you."

"Quite right," Noel answered. A sudden color flushed his dark face, and his gray eyes lighted. "I will see him."

But for all that betraying tremor of excitement, he did not at once see his visitor. He waited until he had been duly introduced to his apartment, until the hotel people had withdrawn, his valet had been set busy at unpacking, and his secretary dismissed for repose after the long voyage. Only then did David Noel light a cigar and walk alone into his private sitting-room.

A small man, with a thin nose of incredible length that fixed the whole character of his face as weasel-like, rose from a pink and gilt chair to salute him.

"You cabled for me to be here at ten

o'clock, I think, Mr. Noel," the man apologized for his presence.

"Yes. I did not allow for some delays at the docks," Noel nodded. "Sorry to have kept you waiting. Sit down. You have brought the information I wanted?"

The private detective permitted himself to smile.

"Oh, certainly, sir! Very simple, and, if I may say so, much pleasanter work than we generally have." He drew a note-book from his breast-pocket. "You wanted information concerning a Miss Bruce, of a family of that name who lived on Madison Avenue."

"Yes!"

"Miss Constance Berkely Bruce, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Berkely Bruce," the man read. "Born at the above residence June 4, 1892. Educated in New York and Europe. Débutante four years ago. Married April 20, 1913, to the Hon. Cecil Rhodes Lancaster, of Fairmeade Manor, England. Present residence, London, England."

He closed the note-book with a cheerful snap and waited.

Absolute silence held the room. David Noel did not move; not a line of expression changed in his face. Only he lowered his gaze to the cigar between his fingers, so that his eyes were hidden.

Not too dull to suspect a romance, the other man copied the example of silence; meanwhile glancing alertly around the rose and gold apartment by way of diversion.

"Have you by any chance a personal description of Mrs. Lancaster?" Noel finally spoke.

"I saw her once, sir, at a big ball where I was on guard against thieves," the man answered. He looked his surprise at this development. "A handsome young lady—brown hair and eyes, and a nice complexion."

There was no mistake, then! The description fitted too well. Noel deliberately reached for a match and relighted his cigar.

"Very good!" he said, when the task was accomplished. "You will understand that I wished to trace a childhood friendship. The lady was ten years old at the time I last saw her. Let me write a check for your charges."

"I hope the service was satisfactory, Mr. Noel?"

"Quite."

That was all. When the little detective presently bowed himself out, David Noel turned his back upon the trail of the magic shoes.

Or, rather, the trail had run out. So far it had led him, by such strange ways, yet up, always up! He had the emotions of one who has struggled toward some sun-bright mountain peak through a thousand hardships and bitter discouragements, and who finally, toil-worn, scarred, reaches the coveted goal—to find that the summit is barren, a naked rock.

The princess was married! Now he wondered why he had expected anything else. What to her could the street-boy have seemed other than a hungry sparrow on her window-sill, or one of the many beggars who doubtless had profited by her sweet generosity?

In that country which he had made his, David Noel had been nicknamed the Reconstructor. An hour after the detective had left him he was resolutely busied in constructing a new purpose in life to take the place of the shattered one.

He told himself that he could not possibly feel any sense of personal loss, so delicate, vague, and infantile had been that innocent love-dream. He had worked and built his success for his own sake; for months at a time he had not had a thought to spare for the girl-child. True, she had stood on the shining peak. Hers had been the figure in the far-off Temple of Success, but—

But that was over! He had come north to take a wife. Very well; he would take one. He wanted a home, and he needed a wife in his career.

The princess was married—yes, but

there were other princesses. He calmly made his decision. He would marry one of the beautiful, fastidious, extravagantly reared Americans whom he was certain to meet in New York and Washington. He would spend on her the lavish wealth meant for the girl who had not waited. Her beauty should satisfy his eyes and his pride; her extravagance his vanity—the vanity of a self-made man. Was the thought vulgar? Well, he was of the East Side streets.

At his ring, his secretary entered.

"There is mail waiting, Valdez?" Noel inquired.

The young man, who was the son of an ex-president of the new republic, smiled eager anticipation.

"Surely yes, *señor!* Some business correspondence, for which I have drafted answers, and a heap"—he illustrated with a gesture of dark, slender hands—"a pyramid of invitations."

Noel nodded.

"Good! Show me your drafts. The invitations—accept as many as do not conflict with one another. I leave the choice to your social judgment. It is"—a sardonic smile bent his lips—"at least as good as mine."

CHAPTER IV

THE SEARCH

IN the old legend, nothing was more easy than to dive into the whirlpool. The difficulty was to come out again unharmed, and to bring the golden cup which lay at the bottom. David Noel had stepped into the social vortex. He was swept to its center with somewhat bewildering speed, and carried round and round its monotonous gaities.

May melted into June. June fused into a fierce, savagely cruel July, even for New York; yet Noel had not yet glimpsed a loving-cup shaped to his lips. Princesses, yes—girls whose loveliness dazzled his eyes, yet somehow missed his fancy.

He began to grow restless and out of patience with himself. Still he stubbornly persisted; went to country houses, to Adirondack lodges, to sea and hills, as indefatigably as if he had some new campaign. Young Valdez was deliriously happy, in and out of love a dozen times. Noel looked at his secretary with blended exasperation and envy.

In the middle of July he left Valdez at a house-party and returned to New York alone. In September he must return to South America; and he was resolved to take a wife with him. All the obstinacy of his nature was fixed on that.

He had come to New York to think, and he intended to leave the city with decision made; but the days passed and brought nothing. No princess's foot would carry on the trail left by the false little shoes which had vanished and left him lost.

He began to reflect that love is not necessary to marriage. Friendship might be enough, with all that his money could give the girl, and all that his occupations would give him for relief. He was beginning to discover that most princesses were decidedly practical, not to say cold of heart.

It was during these last days that Noel idly fell to watching a girl who daily passed that hotel window before which he was accustomed to take his breakfast. She was a very ordinary girl indeed, and very, very far from being even a countess or a duchess, not to speak of a princess.

Quite obviously she belonged to those who work that they may live. The fixed hour at which she passed the hotel window each day, the sober little frock she always wore, a certain air of purpose about her, all proved her one of the city's toilers. As such, she was absolutely outside of David Noel's range of thought.

Yet, somehow, he looked at her. Every morning he saw her dance past him on the sunny side of the street. She really walked, of course, but she walked as only the born dancer can—with an earth-

spurning lightness, an enchanting suppleness of strong little arched foot and rounded ankle, a rhythmic sway of lithe young body and limbs.

She carried her small chin uptilted, as if she half expected some one to look over her shoulder, at any moment, in a maxixe flirtation; but she was not at all the kind of girl with whom any one could flirt. Noel recognized that at once. She was as clean as the sunshine she evidently loved; and she flashed through the grimy streets with much the same unharmed and shining serenity.

Had David Noel been less restless and dissatisfied, probably he never would have noticed the little plebeian. He fell to watching her from sheer weariness of himself, with the same indifferent, casual attention that he bestowed upon park squirrels and swaggering gutter-sparrows. He never dreamed of exchanging speech with her.

That is, never until the day when he found that she had hungry eyes.

He was surveying some orange-juice, set before him in a heap of prism-tinted ice. He did not want that sour distillation of travel-ripened fruit; he wanted a freshly gathered orange from his own fragrant gardens.

The window beside him was open, and between the curtains crept a sluggish, unsavory air—an air smelling of sun-tortured asphalt, horses, and burned gasoline. He did not want that atmosphere any more than he wanted his breakfast. Disgusted, out of humor, he turned his head—and confronted the girl who was not a princess.

She was outside, of course, on the sidewalk before his window. Of course, too, she had not stopped to gaze at the dark-faced young man who scorned his breakfast. Her red-brown eyes were intent upon a large glass show-case which had been moved to the door during an elaborate cleaning of the approach to the breakfast-room—a door opening upon the cross street, instead of the avenue.

Her eyes were lovely in tint and

depth, but they were more than hungry—they were avid. They gleamed with eager desire. Noel saw her silk-gloved hands clench expressively, saw her nostrils flutter and expand. She wanted—what? His glance traced her regard.

The show-case contained a varied display. There were silver vanity-cases and purses, markers for bridge-whist, vases of silver-threaded crystal, a gaudy cushion of gilt brocade, several fans, a fancy lamp, and a French doll gorgeously appareled. The girl was looking at the doll.

If she had been caught by the allure of any trinket or ornament there, Noel would not have been stirred, except to cynical amusement. But the doll! Surely that implied unselfishness, at least, since she could not want the plaything for herself.

He wondered what a baby sister to this girl's prettiness would be. A sunny bit of mischief, probably, and not unlike the French doll. He glanced from the brown curls of the beauty in the glass case to the bronze curls of the girl on the sidewalk, and smiled at his own fancy.

At that instant the girl turned and met his eyes across the barrier of the window-sill. Somehow entangled, their glances lingered together. Noel's regard was curious, yet kinder than he himself realized. The girl's eyes were candid and grave, for all their startled widening.

And then, to his enormous surprise, she spoke to him:

"I beg your pardon, but perhaps you know—perhaps you will tell me—how one gets those things? I mean, does one dance for them?"

Of course she spoke of dancing! What in all the world could seem more natural to her? Her very voice was light and came like hurrying steps, with smooth, unexpected little glides and hesitations.

"Yes," Noel answered. "Those are prizes offered by the hotel, each evening after eleven o'clock, to the best pair of dancers on the floor."

"To the best couple?"

"Certainly."

Disappointment clouded the girl's face, and a childish patience crept into the farewell glance that she turned toward the show-case.

"Thank you," she told David, with a bend of her head.

But he was not minded to be dismissed quite so summarily. She had pricked his interest and curiosity.

"You like the doll?" he asked, pleasantly impersonal. "I believe it is ticketed for to-night's contest, if you intend to compete."

"Thank you," she said again. "No, I cannot. I thought it might perhaps be for one dancing alone."

The originality of the suggestion prompted Noel to arrest her departure by another speech.

"But surely you did not wish to come alone?" he exclaimed.

Dignity stiffened her attitude.

"Surely not, sir. I have a friend who might bring me. Unfortunately he is too old to dance, even if he knew how."

"No younger escort?" he marveled, with a smile of incredulity.

She gave him a straight glance. Noel saw the burning air of the street quiver behind her in the sunlight, a background of swirling golden motes.

Her face, ivory-white as a petal from one of the velvet, cream-hued water-lilies that he had seen in the tropic rivers he knew so well, was faintly and sweetly damp, as the flower might have been. He was close enough to see that, and sophisticated enough to recognize that she used no powder or rouge to ruin the fresh dewiness which so seldom outlasts childhood. Where she stood, a thermometer would have registered nearly a hundred degrees; he did not wonder at her heat-pallor, but he did wonder at the vitality and vigorous life, instinct even in her arrested stillness of the moment.

"You have been very good to answer my questions," she said clearly; "but I did wrong in speaking to you."

Before the startled Noel grasped the rebuke, she had gone. Nor could she

have been traced, but in the very act of flight her glance encountered the French doll in the show-case. Her lingering was hardly more than the space of a drawn breath, yet it gave Noel time to fling back his chair and reach the door soon enough to see which way she turned at the corner of the street.

His swinging stride easily overtook even her light-footedness. Again he noticed, as he bore down upon her, the enchanting grace of her movements.

"I beg your pardon," he said, when he was beside her. "I suppose I deserved that reproach for my clumsiness; but not for my intention! I offended you; will you accept my apology?"

She stopped short, looking up at him.

"Yes," she granted, after a moment.

There was no encouragement in the monosyllable; yet Noel persisted, urged on by an impulse as wild as youth, and utterly foreign to his own nature.

"Believe me, I am not so dull as to mistake your reason for speaking to me. You thought only of that doll. You wanted it!"

"Yes," she said again.

How curious an allure she had for him! Noel marveled at it even while he spoke. She was pretty; but he had turned from absolute loveliness, unstirred. No, there was something else—something which had drawn his gaze to her alone among the hurrying crowd that passed his window each day.

"I should like you to have the doll," he said, watching her. "I would not annoy or frighten you, please understand. Do you think that you could grant me the honor of being your partner in the dancing-contest this evening? Probably we never should see each other afterward. It would be just an act of comradeship between passers-by on the great road."

Her eyes, the color of topaz, widened and darkened. Her lips parted. Noel saw amazement, anger, doubt, and refusal flit across the transparent scroll of her face. Then all were swept away in

the sudden dazzle and flash of a smile all mockery and young mischief.

"Do you dance—pretty well?" questioned the girl.

The question, the smile! With startling abruptness the clue was thrust upon David Noel. This shabby young toiler of the city resembled the princess—the baby princess of long ago. That was the lure that had snared his unsatisfied eyes, the trick that chance had played him. Probably, the man thought, fixing her in his contemplation, she did not at all resemble the Hon. Mrs. Lancaster. She was too simple, too frankly natural for that world; but she did look like the child that Constance Bruce had been.

Out of the whirling confusion of his discovery he managed to answer with the impassive face of diplomatic training:

"I am not a professional, but neither are the other dancers. You accept?"

"I want the doll!" she answered.

"You are not afraid of me? There is no reason to fear."

"No," she naively agreed, and hesitated. "But—you are very kind."

He forestalled refusal.

"I am not kind, but you remind me of some one who once was very kind to me, and I should like to take with me, to the country where I live, the memory of having done this trifle for you. May I?"

"I must do it!" she breathed, half to herself.

"It is agreed, then," he decided.

"Where may I meet you to-night?"

He rather expected that she would name the hotel, or the street before it. Instead, she replied with entire correctness and dignity:

"Thank you. Will you call for me at my father's home? I am Miss Arloff."

She gave him an address in a side street near Washington Square. Then, obviously, she expected him to stand aside, and he did so.

"At nine o'clock?" he suggested.

"And my name is David Noel."

She assented, with a bend of her bronze-curved little head.

Noel slowly walked back to the hotel recalling his hatless condition and his abandoned breakfast. He called himself a fool, yet knew himself profoundly stirred, even excited, by the girl's likeness to the child his boyhood had loved. He realized that the resemblance came merely from a similarity of eyes and curls and a childish roundness of the young girl's face; but then he actually remembered little more definite of Constance Bruce.

Constance! She had not been the constant one to that youthful pact. He idly wondered what had become of the cheap turquoise ring which he had denied himself many things in order to buy for his princess. Well, it had been paid for—by a kiss!

Constance! He fell to wondering what was Miss Arloff's first name. And from that he fell to smiling at her ingenuous confidence in her own dancing, and at her challenge as to his ability. Evidently she believed that for her to dance was for her to win the prize. He felt that it remained for him to see that she was not disappointed.

Noel had an engagement for that evening to dine out on Long Island. This he was unceremonious enough to break by telephone. Afterward he sent for the manager of the dining-room.

"Mr. Deltaille," he announced, when that official arrived, "I want a table and supper for two at ten o'clock this evening. Let Jules arrange the menu; I myself know nothing of the lady's tastes, except that she is very young and probably fond of sweets. And we shall dance. It is necessary that the French doll displayed among the prizes shall be awarded to my guest."

The manager responded to the other's brief smile, but with troubled regret.

"Pardon, Mr. Noel; I should be delighted, but it is not allowed. The prizes are fairly awarded; there is a board of judges."

"I am aware of all that," Noel cut short the objection. "You have not un-

derstood me. I wish to pay you now the price of the doll, and have you present it to the lady with me in any tactful way you choose, so that she will regard it as her prize. She is a novice at such contests; you will find the thing simple. You can buy another doll for the genuine competition. She has set her fancy upon winning the doll now exhibited, and I wish her to have that pleasure. Any price suitable, including your inconvenience—"

"It is irregular, sir, but for a lady!" A shrug and smile. "Perhaps fifty dollars?"

So the stage was set for the triumph.

CHAPTER V

THE LIE

DAVID NOEL dressed that night with a sense of anticipation and interest that had been missing from among his emotions these last months. He had been perfectly sincere in telling Miss Arloff that in all probability they never would meet after this night. Soon he would choose a wife, as he had planned, and return to his busy life in the far south. The girl would go on her road—a humble road, no doubt, but sunnier for her passing. Why, then, should he feel so keen a pleasure in this interlude?

That question Noel could not answer to himself at first; but as he was entering the elevator, at half past eight, he discovered the reason in a flash of self-knowledge—or fancied that he discovered it.

"I am doing something for some one besides myself," he caustically informed his conscience. "And it is a novelty! I had better get back to work, or I shall dry-rot."

He looked at his reflection in a narrow mirror set in the wall of the elevator; at his carefully attired body, whose heavy muscles rippled the sleekness of his evening coat and mocked at his pose of an idle gentleman; at his dark face, whose grim lines of labor and endurance no

massage could smooth away. The back of the hand that held his hat was crossed by a white seam that ran up his arm to the shoulder—the scar left by one of those terrible fighting days that had written a new country into the world's lexicon.

Suddenly he experienced a strong exasperation, a sense of enormous failure. All his years of really conscious life he had been toiling toward this triumphant return to New York. Now he stood here holding every trophy he had dreamed of wresting from victory, and found himself indifferent.

Dull red was smoldering in either cheek as he walked across the lobby toward a door opened for him by an obsequious Jamaican negro, whose speech was oddly correct and English.

"A gardenia, Mr. Noel?" insinuated the voice of the young woman in charge of a flower-booth beside the portal. "Or a carnation for your lapel?"

He shook his head and passed out. That bit of foppery would have seemed to him, in this mood, as absurdly placed on his muscular chest as a tassel on an army rifle. Moreover, the girl's wistful eyes were present in his memory. Why should he flaunt his excess of luxury before her neediness?

Even at night the streets were poisonously fetid and hot; the air was like the breath of some monstrous beast crouched over the city. A round moon looked down through the thick heat-haze like a sullen eye.

Noel thought of the engagement he had broken; of a house on Long Island, opposite the moon-silvered waters of the Sound, where he might have been at this hour. A girl would be there, too, lounging in a deep chair on a rug-covered veranda, with a scarf drawn across the cool whiteness of her bare shoulders and bosom. But he did not wish himself beside her, even though he had almost decided that she should be the substitute princess whom he would take home. He was too curious about

this night's adventure to wish himself elsewhere.

The streets were full of people—people walking, sitting on steps and stoops, and even perched upon fire-escapes and curbstones. They were literally forced into the outer air by the intolerable smother of heat, yet even in the open they drooped, languid, almost silent, exhausted.

From all this swarming life, Noel's way led him into a sudden lifelessness—sudden because the distance between was so short. The street where Miss Arloff's direction took him was a street of business houses, comparatively deserted at this hour of rest from buying and selling.

The business was conducted in rows of dull brick or stone-fronted residences of a past decade. Shop-windows were improvised in scandalized old drawing-rooms or areas; gilt lettering displayed alien names across upper rooms that had been scented boudoirs or bedchambers of solid dignity. Here and there a dim light burned to illuminate an "opportunity" in hats, or furs suffocatingly out of season, or garish chinaware.

Noel's footsteps rang loud in the empty gloom, to which the dead, hot atmosphere added its depression. Could the dancing girl have come from here? Or had she given an address at random to rid herself of the man who followed? Or did she plan to meet him on the threshold of one of these dingy establishments, with a pretense of living there to mask her real dwelling-place?

Noel wondered; but presently he was ashamed of the vague distrust. The house numbered as he sought was not closed. A light showed on the second floor and through a panel of the front door.

He mounted the high, narrow steps slowly, a trifle uncertain as to his course. Perceiving an old-fashioned bell, he pulled the handle.

He heard no tread; the door was too massive. The hinges turned without warning. Noel found himself facing an

old man who stood in the opening like the reality of some powerful, dark-shaded, somber painting by a Rembrandt or a Frans Hals—a Jew, high of brow, thin-nostriled, narrow-eyed, large and gaunt of frame.

Astounded, Noel mechanically lifted his hat in acknowledgment of the other's personality, and the two men scrutinized one another. Each was worthy of study in his own way, nor had either cause to fear it. The fine attire of the man who had succeeded was no more fastidiously worn or cleaner than the threadbare garments of the other; his poise was no better assured. But the stern, ascetic face of the elder was not steadier or cleaner in purport than the younger man's.

Perhaps they pleased each other. Noel smiled a tender of friendliness as he spoke.

"Miss Arloff? I think—"

Before the old man could reply, a light foot sounded on the stairs, and the dancing girl appeared. She bowed to Noel with a blush that flitted across her face like the reflection of a rosy lamp carried past her.

"Good evening," she greeted him in her pretty voice, with its quaint hesitation and trick of emphasizing certain words. "You were good not to forget!"

"That I could not do," Noel answered courteously.

But when he would have moved toward the girl, and she toward him, the old man deliberately raised his arm and laid it across the doorway as a barrier. He said nothing at all, holding his hostile gaze on Noel with an expression clearer than speech.

"Abel!" the girl exclaimed. "Oh!"

The swift remonstrance that tumbled from her lips was in a language not English. The guardian on the threshold did not stir, or even reply. He looked at Noel.

"I will bring Miss Arloff home before midnight," David said quietly. "You may trust her with me. Will you take my card as an introduction?"

The other took the card without glancing at it.

"He knows no English," the girl explained. "Oh, he is absurd!"

The stamp of her small foot had no more effect than her command; but, still looking at Noel, the old man slowly dropped his arm and stood aside. David had all the sensations of a small boy who has creditably passed a severe examination at school, when the girl crossed that threshold and stood beside him. As they went down the steps, the door closed with a sullen shock of sound.

"I am so sorry—" she began.

"Please do not speak of that. You have a steadfast guardian there."

"Abel was my father's secretary, and now is his nurse," she defined the old man's position. "Long before I was born, my father saved him from a dreadful massacre of the Jewish people in Russia. Abel has never forgotten. He is good and learned and faithful, but he does not understand our America."

Noel murmured some assent. His attention was fixed upon the girl herself, busy tracing that fanciful resemblance.

As they passed a street-lamp he saw that she wore a frock of thin black silk, daintily full and short enough to show demure, ribbon-laced black slippers, which neither had nor needed buckle or bow to hide the curves of the exquisite, firm little feet that somehow looked so strong. Her small black hat, tilted to one side in the fashion of the hour for princess and shop-girl alike, exposed a sweep of silky brown curls, bright even in that light. Decidedly, she was as pretty as Constance Bruce could have been, had the princess grown as her childhood promised.

His silence infected her. They spoke very little during the walk to his hotel. The people still filled the streets, which murmured with voices and movement. Against his will, Noel's mind filled with sordid, jostling memories of his miserable boyhood—of heat like this, and hunger; of dreadful cold, and hunger. The past

clutched at him while he walked there beside the girl who seemed a mockery of his broken dream.

He was glad when they reached the hotel. Now he could shake off his morbidness, and end this adventure which he had begun to repent commencing. What had possessed him that morning?

He had paused to yield his hat and coat to an attendant. When he turned to his companion, the exasperation that had been growing up within him withered away. The girl had moved a step aside. Her mouth upcurled at the corners like a merry child's; she was smiling delightedly at a very small Chinese dog being led past by a negro bell-boy.

"Pray let me stroke him!" she exclaimed with a charming eagerness. "Oh, he is dear!"

The servitor relaxed into a grin at once genial and respectful. He obeyed with a readiness rather surprising to Noel, bringing the little dog to a halt within reach of the girl's hand.

"He's a prize-winner, miss," he volunteered. "Mighty fine dog, sure!"

The Pekingese nestled its muzzle into the girl's palm, instinctively friendly.

"I had one once," she breathed. Then she straightened herself with a dismayed start of recollection, and turned to Noel. "Oh, I beg your pardon! I did not see that you were waiting. Thank you," she concluded, nodding to the negro.

She dismissed the servant well, Noel observed with a touch of envy. He himself commanded obedience as a right, but early habit is hard to overcome. He never had acquired that blend of familiarity and aloofness which keeps servitors deferential, yet devoted.

"Shall we go in?" he said.

"Oh, yes! Can we dance for the doll now?"

"Presently. I have assumed that you will do me the honor of taking supper with me."

To his astonishment her face clouded.

"If it is necessary—" she began doubtfully.

"I think it is," he answered, amused, and a little skeptical as to her sincerity.

"Then—thank you!"

The head waiter met them at the arched entrance to the supper-room, and marshaled them to a pink-lighted table laid for two.

"I ventured to order in advance," Noel said, when they were seated; "but if there is anything you would like—"

"Please," she accepted unexpectedly, "I should like iced orange-juice in a thin glass, like what you had this morning. It looked so good!"

"I have ordered a different iced drink," he informed her, not without intention. "Still, if you prefer orange-juice—"

"I should, please!"

She was stanch in her choice, too. Noel had learned to order cocktails for his feminine guests, and to consult their tastes in wine. Miss Arloff ignored the first beverage when it was set before her, and turned her glass against the second. The orange-juice she drank slowly with frank enjoyment.

"You should taste a ripe orange, just picked from the tree, and served to you by a sleepy-eyed native boy clad in white linen, with a sash the color of the fruit," he told her.

"Those would be fairy oranges," she laughed. "When you opened them, out would fly the yellow bird that was to turn into a princess."

He started, the chance speech cut so close to the core of his thought.

"It was in a house built for a princess that I ate them in that way," he said deliberately.

"Lucky princess, to have a palace nowadays!"

"It was a palace, almost. It was built of white stone, and stood on the last slope of a huge mountain range. The ocean lay low before it, and the mighty hills rose up behind until their peaks showed salt-white with snow against the sky; and the man who owned it was master of all those blue distances between shore and summit.

Yes, and farther than he owned, he ruled as modern men do—by influence. His house was furnished within by New York and London and Paris, and surrounded without by gardens and parks."

"Now you are telling *me* a fairy story!"

"No. For the man was successful, and every year of his success he added something to the house. It grew gradually, you see."

Her large eyes wondered at him across the table. Evidently she was considering the picture he had drawn, the original of which was far more real to him than this city of his birth. There was a kind of bitter pleasure in speaking of that empty house to the girl who looked like Constance Bruce. He had never yet mentioned the villa to the girl on Long Island.

Music drowned conversation for a while. The hour set for the contest had not yet arrived, but there were the usual dances. Noel observed that the girl paid scant heed to them, and evinced no desire to take part in them. Her indifference confirmed his growing belief that she was a professional dancer.

He never had seen so graceful a creature except among the principals of certain famous ballets. Even the movement of her hands, the turn of her wrists, the poise of her flowerlike head, were characterized by a smooth, flowing suavity of action quite indescribable. He became very curious to see her dance.

Meanwhile, she was very easy to talk to. She did not rudely insist upon his continuing to speak of the house built for a princess, although the topic had obviously entrapped her fancy. She was a responsive and animated companion, as free from shyness as a well-bred child.

Why, Noel wondered with a touch of impatience, why was he always comparing her with childhood? She was a woman grown. Constance herself was a matron, perhaps a mother.

They had been chatting of different things, when the girl abruptly returned to their first subject.

"That house you spoke of—has it a name, perhaps?"

Noel looked down at the plate that a waiter was placing before him.

"Yes," he reluctantly answered. He had the oddest sense of embarrassment before her clear eyes. "That is, the natives gave it one; and now every one knows it by that name—in their language, of course. They call it the Great House of the Little Shoes."

"But why?"

"A fancy of the owner's. On each side of the entrance stands a stone pillar, and carved on each one is a small shoe."

"A lady's?"

"A child's."

The girl asked nothing more. Indeed, the pause lasted beyond the limits of conventionality, until the man grew restless and wondered. Was her curiosity busy with him? Had she guessed his identity with the builder of the house?

Noel stirred angrily in his seat. Was she secretly divining his sentimentality, and mocking at it? That was impossible. Who could guess the story of the magic shoes? Yet, how still she was! How—

There came the roll of a drum, and a man's voice spoke in the loud tones of announcement. It was the hour of the contest for that first prize which only David Noel knew was already his own. The girl's eyes glinted like sun-touched jewels. She looked up eagerly to Noel, ready as a butterfly poised for flight.

Before that glance his dark mood fled away. He smiled at her as he arose. At once she was opposite him; her soft body yielded itself to his touch.

He had not needed the bribe to obtain the doll for her. Before they had circled the floor once, Noel knew that. Never had he held a partner like this one in any dance. She drifted with him; obedient to his barest motion, yet scarcely more in his clasp than an armful of painted air.

Where had he heard a vague legend of a beautiful woman-creature called Lilith, who was nothing but a phantasm of "painted air," exquisite and unreal as a

rainbow? Surely that was an incongruous memory to haunt one in a prosaic hotel supper-room!

The dance was a new and rather difficult waltz. Presently little bursts and ripples of applause broke out from different groups of spectators, who turned from the business of supping or drinking to watch this couple pass. The applause grew, pursuing the two around the room like a following wave of sound.

Ordinarily, the very distinguished Señor Don David would have been very distinctly annoyed at his position of conspicuous frivolity. To-night he was truly bewitched. Indeed, he had been so ever since that morning when the dancing girl had spoken across his window.

She had taken off her gloves at the table, so her small hand lay palm to palm with his. From that contact strange currents seemed to flow between them, until the man could have fancied their very thoughts common property. A slow, profound excitement began to beat through Noel like a pulse.

This girl—what if she were a compromise offered by chance? Since her mere likeness to Constance Bruce could stir him so, what if he yielded to that old weakness which it seemed he could not shake off? Better, perhaps, to satisfy his eyes with the substitute, rather than take home some random princess who was a stranger both to his gaze and his heart.

All his life he had labored. What if henceforth he laid down ambition and drifted without purpose as this languorous waltz music eddied and swung in lazy measures?

The music stopped. Bewildered, David Noel jerked his mind out of fancy into fact, and led the girl back to their table. The clapping hands, the curious stares, the glances admiring or jealous, were no more to him than a background for the central figure of his companion.

The girl was looking at him across the table, her face vivid, even dazzling, in its bright triumph and delight. Her lips, scarlet now, were parted by her flutter-

ing breath. Her curls evidenced their genuineness by crisping into still closer tendrils of shining bronze about her smooth, boyish forehead and little ears; not drooping in the hot, damp atmosphere, as did the coiffures of many of the other women.

"We have won?" she questioned. "Oh, surely we have won?"

"You have," Noel replied.

"I may have the doll?"

"I should think there could be no doubt of that."

She sighed contentedly, and addressed herself to the chocolate *parfait* before her.

Noel watched the appetite with which she finished the sweet, half melted during their dance. What should he say to her? How pleasant a thing it would be to awake that fresh, candid enjoyment of hers with more durable sensations than orange-juice and ice-cream! Frocks, for example. Oh, he certainly was glamourised out of all common sense; a man beside himself!

Noel clenched his hand on the napkin across his knee. Because he distrusted his own folly, he did not speak at all.

Yet, when he was silent, that inexplicable excitement surged up again, shaking him as a strong wind shakes a structure which it cannot overthrow. It was as if some opportunity, muffled from his recognition, were thundering upon the closed door of his understanding.

"You said"—the girl's voice slipped into his reverie—"that a princess lived in that house. It was abroad, then? In Europe?"

"No," he slowly replied. How she returned to that subject! "I said that it was built for a princess. She never lived in it."

"She will?"

"Never. Some other woman may."

"And look across from the mountains to the sea, and go through the gate of the little shoes, and walk in the deep garden? Oh! But you are spoiling the play when you say so. You told it to me as a play,

didn't you? I mean, as a play at a theater is just to amuse?"

He checked the answer that rushed to his lips.

"You know all about theaters, I suppose," he forced himself to remark casually. "Of course, you are a professional dancer—on the stage, I mean. Your beautiful skill—"

"No," she denied. "No; I am not."

David Noel experienced a sharp shock of disillusion; a revulsion that overturned his heart and scattered all the winged impulses and desires that had flown there to nest since the morning when this girl had faced him in the street. For she spoke a lie!

He knew that only tireless, hourly practise, day after day, could have produced that grace of hers; that exquisite suppleness and strength masked in apparent fragility; that trained, unconscious posing of even each slender finger in action or in repose. It was as absurd to deny that as to assert that some Italian garden of fastidious cultivation had grown up out of a wilderness alone and unaided, producing of itself the contrast of snowy sun-dial against clipped turf, or the upleap of fountains in the sun. She was a dancer, and she had lied!

Why?

He was saved the embarrassment of finding speech by the approach of Deltaille with the doll, amid an approving murmur from those who watched. No one wondered at the award, or desired further contest; the superiority of this couple had been too obvious, too far beyond rivalry.

Miss Arloff turned in her chair to meet the manager, and held out both hands for the doll with such an innocent face of eagerness that the delighted room broke into a little tempest of hand-clapping.

"Thank you so *very* much!" she said to the smiling Deltaille. "It is a lovely doll, and I am *very* glad!"

Against his will, Noel noted again her natural self-possession, at once so modest and so high-bred. She settled the doll in

the curve of her arm with the simplicity of a little girl at play. But the charm was broken. Why had she flung into their idyl the shattering mischief of a lie?

Well, it was done, and done in time. He stood committed to nothing. Tomorrow he would ask the girl on Long Island to marry him. He met Miss Arloff's glance, when it returned to him, without a flicker of expression in his gray eyes. His rather hard face was locked in coldness as a winter lake.

While he wondered sullenly how he was to end a situation suddenly grown distasteful to him, the girl forestalled his intention.

"We may go now?" she questioned. "I shall never be able to thank you enough, but I shall always remember how kind you have been—always! I remember things. We may go?"

She was poised to rise; her expectant eyes awaited his movement. Obviously, it had not occurred to her that they might remain in pleasant dalliance after the business of their evening was over. She was not afraid or rude; it was simply that they had finished their affair.

"Certainly," Noel stiffly agreed.

But he was scarcely pleased by her calm dismissal of him, after all. He signaled his waiter, signed the check when it was brought, and rose, still tongue-tied.

Apparently his guest noticed nothing wrong. She smiled happily at the attendant who drew back her chair. Leaning across the pink-lighted table, she lifted a stalk of gladiolus from the central vase.

"As an echo from the ball!" she said lightly, drawing the flower through her belt.

And she denied being an actress! Noel made a caustic mental comment. Why had she stooped to falsehood? Surely she did not suppose him so stupidly narrow-minded as to be prejudiced against her because she was a dancer? He was neither a puritan nor an infant.

They made their way out, the target of many glances. The dance music for the next contest was already commencing

—a noisy fox-trot marked by the crash of brasses and the beat of a drum. There was no languorous enchantment there, or anywhere, now.

Midnight was bringing little coolness to the panting city, but the streets were less stifling than the interior of the restaurant had been. Carrying her doll, the girl walked silently beside the silent man, her aerial lightness and swiftness of step easily keeping pace with his longer stride. Evidently she had perceived at last that something was wrong. Noel felt the puzzled scrutiny of her gaze upon him as they passed beneath each street-lamp.

He was not pleased with his own dumb mood. Why could he not conclude gracefully a daintily fantastic adventure? What was it to him if this girl who flitted across his path for an evening chose to speak falsely or truly of herself? Surely it should be no hard task to talk with a pretty woman while they walked a few streets in company!

The streets were passed, yet he continued mute. The girl had ceased to look toward him. She carried her little head high, and there was no meekness in her silent dignity; but he fancied that she moved less buoyantly.

David told himself that a gentleman would have finished the episode gallantly. He was finishing it like a gamin of the slums!

They were in that still, ghostly street where she lived. And now, when their separation loomed as a gate in the act of closing between this night and all future nights, Noel was gripped and shaken anew by that curious and terrible sense of opportunity lost.

A huge white hand, seemingly thrust arrestingly out of the darkness before him, made his nerves leap in almost superstitious recoil before he realized that it was only the sign of a glove-cleaner's shop. He wondered if the heat was affecting him. Then he could have laughed at the absurdity of that idea as applied to a veteran of the tropics.

They were climbing the steps to her

door, and he had not yet spoken. If only she had been honest with him!

On the threshold, the girl faced him and put out her hand.

"I shall never forget your very great goodness," she said, gravely formal, yet tricked by the soft cadences and delicious irregularities of her voice into unsteady wistfulness. "I hope you may always be as happy as you are kind!"

That was all. For an instant he saw her face against the shadows, like a water-lily floating on a dark lake. Her eyes, so hauntingly like the eyes of long ago, braved his sternly hostile regard. Then she was gone through the dim opening, and the thick door had closed its barrier.

Too late, Noel would have spoken; but she was gone, and he had not found one word to give her—not even a bald "good-by."

Slowly he turned away to the head of the steps, and confronted a man at their foot. David stopped. The other man ascended without pause or haste. Opposite Noel, he halted with stately deliberation, bowed to the younger man, and passed into the house. It was the fine, old-world figure of the Jew, the dancing girl's guardian.

Gradually there returned to Noel's recollection, as he stood astonished, the knowledge that another footfall than their own had echoed in the dull street when he and the girl came here. The old man had followed them, no doubt, both in their going and coming.

More—Noel remembered a dark figure which he had glimpsed from the window beside their supper-table—a man who leaned in the shadow of the building opposite. If she was not a princess, she was guarded like one! Since he was never to see her again, there was no reason for the satisfaction Noel felt in that fact; yet he did feel it.

Why had her small palm against his moved him to depths unstirred for years? Why did he walk back to his hotel with a heavy sense of weariness and self-reproach?

He had seen a mocking ghost of the princess—nothing more than a mockery. To him it was abominable that the girl who looked like Constance Bruce should speak a lie!

CHAPTER VI

THE DAUGHTER OF VASIL ARLOFF

THE next day Noel went out to Long Island, as had been agreed over the telephone on the previous evening, when he had broken his dinner engagement.

He was entertained by his hosts with a cordiality almost affectionate. He loitered through the sunny morning with the young lady whose blond handsomeness and cool amiability had decided his choice of her as his future wife. He was seated beside her during the intimate family luncheon, which was served on a shaded veranda overlooking the Sound. But in the afternoon he drove back to New York, away from all that beauty and kindness; and he had not asked the blond princess to marry him.

He had come to a more sensible view of the episode of the previous night, Noel told himself. Why should he blame Miss Arloff for not having the heart of Constance Bruce merely because their faces were alike? The girl could be nothing to him, of course; but that gave him no right to insult her. No, he had behaved outrageously!

He did not want to see the dancing girl again; but he had resolved to write a brief note of apology for his dumb mood of that last half-hour, and to send it to her with some flowers. Then he could put the incident out of his mind. At least, he hoped that he could.

When he entered the hotel Noel paused at the florist's stand. The pertly pretty clerk smiled at him, arranging the bangle bracelets on her wrists with a display of elaborately manicured hands.

"How do you do, Mr. Noel? Violets or a buttoner?"

"No, thanks!" He surveyed with dis-

taste the costly flowers massed in gilded baskets and jars. "Something less commonplace."

"Roses? Sweet peas?"

"Have you any water-lilies?"

"No, sir—lilies-of-the-valley."

He hesitated in indecision. The woman eyed him with a touch of malice.

"For a lady, sir? I see you got a dancing prize last night. Of course, your partner is a dancer!"

"Yes," he returned impassively. "You may give me the sweet peas—that little triangular basket there."

But he mentally quivered at this confirmation of his judgment. Miss Arloff had lied; that much was now a certainty.

"Shall I send the peas, Mr. Noel?" the clerk asked, tying the box smartly with green ribbon. "Where to? A card goes with them?"

"Yes," he said absently. "At what theater did you see Miss Arloff?"

He knew that the question was unwise, yet could not refrain from it. The clerk lifted her eyes in a stare of curiosity.

"I didn't say she was on the stage. She ain't. She teaches fancy dancing to a class of kids at the Salle du Ballet Russe, on the avenue. I know, because I know the mother of a girl who's learning there. What address did you say, Mr. Noel?"

"You may give me the box," he slowly answered. "I will take it myself."

It was the hour when the workers of the city swarm through the streets, seeking a million homes after the long day of labor. When David Noel stepped out into the summer evening, he was caught in the swirl of chattering, hurrying humanity.

Six o'clock was ringing from a lofty tower near by. New York glowed under level sun-rays, shot across heaps of gold and rose-colored clouds piled in the west. All was cheer, color, life. Surely this was the city's happy hour, the man thought; not its most brilliant hour, nor the hour of most gaiety, but surely its happiest.

He walked quietly, one with the tired, good-humored crowd, his box under his

arm. The dancing girl had told him the truth, and he was on his way to apologize to her!

As yet, his plans went no further than that errand; but he felt a content as soothing as sleep.

When he reached the street where she lived, most of the business places were closed, and the pouring stream of workers had flowed out, to be dissipated in a thousand directions like a river flowing into sand. Still, enough people were passing to give the street an air of animation.

Noel climbed the steps of the house, and received his first surprise. The heavy old door stood partly open. He saw into a vestibule, floored with squares of black and white marble and paneled with black walnut, highly carved. In odd contrast to this old-fashioned elegance, a row of brass mail-boxes and push-buttons was affixed to the wall. The one-time mansion was now inhabited by several families.

While he hesitated before this new situation, a woman came down the curved stairs—a fat woman who looked like a middle-class dressmaker. She was hurrying, and panting with heat and exertion.

"Arloff?" she answered Noel's inquiry. "Second floor."

She bustled out, and he used the implied freedom to go up without further ceremony.

On the second floor the door opposite him also stood ajar, with only a curtain drawn across. No doubt the heat had prompted any measure which promised a current of air. Between the folds of drapery Noel saw into the room beyond. Involuntarily, he remained at gaze.

The room was furnished as a drawing-room, but in the center was a table laid for two. At one place stood a glass of milk and some thin slices of bread. At the other place was a plate of clear soup, and arranged around this were two chops with brave collars of pink paper, two cream-cakes on a standing dish, and a frosted goblet of claret. In the center of the table, a slender vase upheld that

single stalk of gladiolus which the dancing girl had taken from the hotel board the night before.

Opposite the plate of bread and glass of milk was seated the young girl herself. At the place across from her sat the most dazzling old man David Noel ever had seen or imagined.

He was not old. Noel withdrew that term a moment later. His crisp, white hair curled around a dark, vivid, virile face without a mark of age. All the fire, the energy, the swift-changing play of expression that makes youth beautiful, were still his. There was even youth's touch of spoiled arrogance in the curve of his lips, and more than a little of youth's sweetness.

He was a small man, rather less in stature than the average Anglo-Saxon; yet he gave the observer an impression that he was possessed of unusual strength.

While Noel, unseen, arrested, stared at him, the man spoke in English perfectly constructed, yet delicately foreign:

"You like the gift of your poor papa, my child?"

"Oh, yes!" the girl answered, her voice gaily caressing. She raised from her lap the French doll of the dancing-contest, and with a delightful gesture of coquetry pressed its rosy bisque cheek and yellow curls against her own white cheek and curls of bronze. "It was adorable of you to give her to me, good papa. But she has not a name yet!"

"*Vraiment?* What, then, shall we call her?"

The girl considered.

"Salome, perhaps?"

"Bah! Salome was a vixen!"

"But she danced on her own heart," she murmured, with a faint sigh. "Shall it be Carmencita, papa?"

"Or Anitra, who was an enchantress?"

"It shall be Anitra. Thank you, papa! But you do not eat. This dreadful heat!"

"Pardon, my Rosalind, but I devour ravenously."

At the father's first movement, Noel, still standing in the shelter of the curtain,

drew a breath of wondering comprehension; for it was plain, now, who had taught Rosalind Arloff. The man's grace was a thing unnatural in its perfection. As with the girl, his smooth movements seemed to melt from one unconscious pose into another as water flows from one ripple to the next.

Noel remembered that the names suggested for the doll had all been those of dancers. These two, then—

But what were they doing in poverty, whose obvious talent should have made them rich? Why had the girl wanted the doll, and why did the father speak of it as his gift to her?

His questions received an answer when the father raised his eyes in a glance toward the open window. Magnificent black eyes, faultless in color and shape, they were the restless, tragic eyes of a man mentally sick.

Very quietly Noel drew back and retreated down the stairs. He had added to his offenses toward the young girl by this spying upon her privacy, instead of atoning for his rudeness; but at least she need not know of this.

In the vestibule again, he stooped to find the right bell in the row of four. Surely that man was not an obscure unknown, he thought vaguely. Surely—he smothered an ejaculation. The second bell bore the name of Vasili Arloff.

Vasili! It was by his first name that the man had chosen to be known in his day; Vasili—the first of those dazzling Russian dancers who have come in later years to ravish the eyes and enchant the fancy of America.

In the days when David Noel was a half-starved child in the streets of New York, Vasili had been the city's sensation and idol. The man had been a new type, at least to those who had not lived abroad. Cultivated in mind, of extreme personal beauty, with the silken smoothness of courtesy and speech brought from that foreign court of which he was the idol and toy, he was a slave and devotee to his own art.

No athlete in training for a contest ever lived more strictly, was more narrowly watchful of himself, than this gorgeous dancer amid all the luxury with which he loved to surround himself. He frankly admitted his vanity, and cherished the strength and perfection of his body above rubies or fine gold. Nor, after the first night when he stepped before a startled audience at the Metropolitan in his then novel costume of a leopard-skin and gold sandals, did any one question his right to that superb and innocent vanity.

Standing in the faded, shabby hall, David recalled all he had heard and seen of this man's success and popularity—the fashions Vasili, music Vasili, even dishes Vasili. No wonder the face of the man up-stairs had stirred awake a vague familiarity! And Noel vaguely remembered, too, that there had been some accident, some illness. He himself had been so long in the far south.

Rosalind Arloff was that man's daughter. Surely, if not the Princess Constance, she was a princess royal of dancing!

He turned slowly to the door, then halted. He thought of the single stalk of gladiolus in her vase, and the sweet peas that he carried. Moreover, he had not apologized to her. He swung on his heel and ran up-stairs; but this time he first pushed the bell-button, and made some little noise in his ascent.

CHAPTER VII

DAVID NOEL'S MISTAKE

THE young girl herself drew aside the curtain. She remained fixed in surprise to see him there, looming above her in the dusk of the hallway.

Before her astonishment, Noel suddenly realized that he did not know very clearly what he had come there to say, or how to apologize for the last night's rudeness without confessing that he had doubted her honesty, and so offending

anew. Quite mute, they gazed at each other through a long moment.

"I came—to ask about the doll," finally stammered the diplomat and strategist, statesman and soldier.

She did not smile. For an instant, Noel fancied that she meant to close the door against him; but she drew back, admitting him to the room. Troubled by her silence, he hesitated on the threshold, while she swiftly crossed to the man who had been Vasili and gave him a French girl's pretty salute to an elder.

"Dear papa, we have a visitor," she announced. Her large, clear eyes challenged the younger man from the safety of her father's side. "You will allow me to present Mr. Noel. Mr. Noel, my father."

"Mr. Noel is welcome," said Arloff. He looked steadily at the guest, then smiled abruptly and charmingly. "But we are not strangers! That I cannot rise is my regret, yet I can offer my hand, and a friend will come to me."

Noel came forward to take his host's hand with more diffidence than he had felt since boyhood.

"You are very good," he began, and broke off the sentence. He could not brutally tell this man that they were strangers, and that the recognition was a delusion.

"Mr. Noel has called to see the new doll, papa," the girl continued, a trifle hurriedly.

"Ah!" Arloff smiled again. "Pray be seated, Mr. Noel. Yes, we are keeping festival. My daughter's eleventh birthday! Rosalind, ring for our coffee, my child. Our friend will share it with us, I trust."

In the interval while Noel had stood dreaming in the hall below, the table had been cleared. Rosalind did not ring. She left the room, and herself brought in a quaint, fragile after-dinner coffee service for two. Noel watched her at the dainty business of serving; watched her hands, like little white birds fluttering above the dull blue and gold china; watched the

obstinacy with which her gaze remained fixed upon her task, so that her lowered lashes seemed to cling to her round young cheek like a curtain, never to be lifted for him.

She did not drink of the coffee. At a playful gesture from her father, she took the French doll and set it on her knee. Like the child he fancied her, she remained silent and demure.

But Vasili Arloff talked. He talked as he once had moved among heavier, duller men—marvelously, with a grace never at fault. His conversation was to that of every-day people like a keen-bladed Eastern dagger, hilted with strange, vivid gems found lying amid a chest of workmen's tools. There was no flaw in that fine mind, except the marred memory.

If he had been glamourised the night before, Noel was fairly snared by sorcery to-night. The light in the room faded to a rosy dusk. He listened to the man and watched the girl, himself speaking as little as might be. In all his wild, adventurous, strangely successful years, he never had passed an hour like this.

And never would again! That was the thought which struck him sharply in the face when Arloff at last fell silent. Never, if he married the girl on Long Island! Never, a voice cried within him, if he left here to-night and mocked opportunity the second time!

"Rosalind, your hand," Arloff said dreamily. "Love, Mr. Noel, is the reverse of that legend of St. Elizabeth, whose basket of food for the hungry became a basket of roses when her angry husband challenged her deed of charity. When we are young, we gather love as bright flowers, but in our old age it becomes our bread of life. My wife—"

The dusk was silver-gray now. The noise of the city roared less heavily across the open windows. Presently the young girl spoke, her voice soft and cool.

"He is asleep. Perhaps you will go now!"

Noel leaned forward toward the two who formed so gracious a picture.

"Go? No! You have the right to be angry with me. I came to ask your pardon."

"You thought bad things of me because I spoke to you," she flashed out at him. "I know! I knew—I was afraid, when you came after me on the street that morning; but you seemed so good, so kind!" He heard her catch her breath in a stifled sob. "And I did want the doll—for him."

"Please!" he implored her.

"No, you must hear now. He was dreadfully hurt on my eleventh birthday. He was on his way to buy a doll for me. He was riding a new horse, and somehow it became unmanageable and threw him. His memory never came back altogether. He still believes that I am eleven years old; and every year, when my birthday comes, he must have a doll for me, or he becomes horribly distressed and ill. A cheap little doll will not do. He was used to beautiful, costly things, for money came to him easily."

"I know that; he is the famous Vasili. Please do not speak of the wretched doll!"

"I would rather that you understood. Always Abel and I have managed; but this year a pupil at the dancing-school tore my frock the day before. There was no time; I had to have the new frock in order to give the day's lessons. That did not leave enough to buy the doll. Then I saw the prize doll. But I did wrong; Abel said that I did wrong. You thought lightly of me!"

"I did not!" Her gaze across the dusk compelled him to full truthfulness. "It was not that; but you told me that you were not a professional dancer. I thought you were laughing at me, deceiving me for some reason, for no mere amateur ever danced as you do. I lost my temper. To-night I came to ask your forgiveness."

"My father taught me, ever since I was a baby. I told you that I did not dance upon the stage."

"Yet you could win a fortune there," he suggested.

"My father forbids it. He promised my mother. She was an American. I—I think she hated his dancing."

The resentment had left her voice. Her hand still in that of the slumbering Arloff, as she sat in her low chair, she regarded the younger man with grave security in her position. Noel ventured to lean across and lay the florist's box on her knee.

"You took the flower last night—will you take these? And I have something more to say. The House of the Little Shoes—"

He fancied that a tremor shook her. She wore a dress of some thin, pale-yellow fabric, that left bare her slender young neck and arms. In that light, she gave the glimmering effect of a figure of ivory and gold. Noel's excited impulse hardened into deliberate resolution.

"The house is mine," he said as calmly as he could. "I built it. I told you yesterday morning that I wanted to help you win the doll because you looked like a child who had been kind to me. I built the house—and my life—for that child! I was a boy of the streets, an orphan; poor, ragged, untaught, and wild as a little animal. She was born to everything delicate and fine and luxurious; but it was stamped on my mind that she was to be my wife. Remember that I had not a child's mind, never having had a childhood, as that word is taken to mean gentle things. I loved her!"

Rosalind Arloff neither turned aside from his eyes nor moved. The dimness of twilight was like a thin veil between them, blurring sight, yet Noel divined in her a quivering sympathy of excitement. Oh, he had decided wisely! There could be no jarring regret when this girl drifted like a dancing leaf through the rooms made lovely for Constance. At the worst, there could be nothing harsher than the vague memory of a dream.

"Because she had been reared to wealth, I set myself to gain money," he slowly continued. "That was the easiest task. Because she was dainty and fas-

tidious, I trained myself out of the speech of my class into the speech of hers. I learned to dress as would the men she knew, to carry myself as they would, to play the sports they would play. Because she was pitiful and good beyond the custom of children, I lived cleanly and dealt honestly with other men and women.

"All this took time. I was eleven years old when I met her. This spring I came back, hoping to tell her what I tell you, and to ask her to go home with me; home, to the house that has two little shoes carved at its gate, because of her two little shoes that she once gave me."

"Yes?" the girl breathed.

"I found that she had married a year ago."

After a long interval Rosalind Arloff sighed with an odd patience.

"You know her name, then?" she questioned.

"Yes. That was easily discovered by a few inquiries in the neighborhood of her home. A family of that position was well known."

"Who was she?"

There was no reason why he should not answer the query. After an instant's consideration Noel did so.

"She was Miss Constance Berkely Bruce."

Another long pause fell. The girl's silence and immobility hushed the man. It was almost dark now. Noel knew what he wanted to say, what he meant to say; but a growing discomfort and discouragement gripped him—a sense of having blundered.

While he hesitated the girl began to speak with a hurried, muffled vehemence like the beating of small, futile hands against some barrier.

"Why should you think you love that woman now? Why should you think that you would recognize her, even? If she had been what you believed—a girl who was yours—could she have married some one else? You did all this for her? Then, if she was not somehow aware of

your toiling, of your thoughts pouring out to her like a strong river; if she did not have dreams by night that shut her away from other men by day, if she did not feel you in the world, then you have made a mistake. You do not love a woman, but an idea!"

"That is prettily romantic, but it is hardly common sense," Noel replied, startled and not pleased by the attack.

"And is what you have felt for her common-sensible?"

Noel did not smile at the somewhat remarkable word. That the substitute girl should criticise the princess angered him beyond reason. Because he meant to raise the dancing girl to that high place beside him, he gave her no right to this arrogant judgment of the lost Constance. The restraint he forced upon his voice made his answer colder than he himself realized.

"Probably not, in your eyes. Nevertheless, woman or idea, I have made my life a journey toward that image. Failing to reach that—and I am not used to failure—I will not leave the place blank. When I saw you—"

He stopped, dismayed by his premature frankness. In his irritation and soreness he had spoken as he had never intended. Rosalind Arloff seized the core of his meaning and tore it out in a question as cold and deliberate as his speech.

"Are you telling me that you are offering her place to me because we look alike?"

Deceived by her quietness, and relieved that the point was passed, Noel answered quite eagerly and contritely:

"You would be the only wife I could welcome in my house. There is nothing in the world that I would not give you. Your father and your servant should come with us. You shall have time to learn more of me. To me you seem no stranger. If you will marry me, I will make you happy. You are already beautiful and good!"

She snatched her hand from that of the sleeping man and rose with a swift,

smooth suddenness like the upleap of flame. Noel rose with her, and stood facing her. They were breathing quickly, quivering with a strange and passionate defiance of each other.

"I am glad you told me this!" the girl gasped, clenching her hands. "I am glad to know why you helped me, and why you are here, and what you were thinking when I believed you just kind. You do not love that woman you never saw; you do not love me. You love your own success, your obstinacy that will learn nothing new. Marry you? No, no, and no! I would not marry you if all the world cried out to me. Never—not if I loved you and you loved me! Never—do you hear? Now, go! Go with *no* wife—not even a substitute. Go away!"

"Miss Arloff!"

"Good-by, Mr. Noel!"

"You misunderstand—"

"Good-by, Mr. Noel."

"If I must apologize—"

"Only for staying."

But if she was in a royal rage, he was no less furious. Now that he had lost her, his natural obstinacy, of which she had truly spoken, planted its colors in the face of defeat.

"You accuse me wrongly," he said, unconsciously overbearing and imperative. "I helped you, not for another, but for yourself. I brought those flowers, tonight, for you—the girl who danced with me. You are childish!"

She dropped the box of sweet peas on the floor and stamped her firm little foot upon it, her eyes and lips and cheeks fire-hot.

"I have bidden you good-by, Mr. Noel. Is it necessary for me to call Abel?"

Beaten back, if not beaten, Noel stared at her through the twilight, then sullenly swung on his heel. Even then he vaguely noted the Greek beauty of her pose as she stood with one slender, rigid arm pointing him to the door, and her small, curly head flung high.

Because he was furiously angry, bitter-

ly disappointed, and unwillingly ashamed, he went blindly into the utter darkness of the outer hall. Because she flung shut the door behind him and turned the key, he went with reckless haste.

He missed the top stair. When he clutched the rail to save himself, the old wood snapped under the shock of his weight. Noel had a flashing recollection of the black and white marble floor below, where he had stooped to read Vasili Arloff's name on the card above the row of bells.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRINCESS

SOME one was singing—some one who was a long distance from him. The melody was coaxing, plaintively minor, and sweet; a melody that twined into and about the senses as the tendrils of a vine will creep and cling about a lattice.

That was an absurd fancy! Music—lattices! What was wrong with his brain to find any connection between such alien matters?

Perhaps he was bewildered by the thick darkness. Never before had he experienced such long-continued darkness. And there was nothing to do except listen to the song.

After a time words commenced to break through the music, like flowers opening upon the vine. He listened attentively until he caught whole phrases and sentences. The song was a love-song. It was about a lover and a princess. She was to bind her hair and come to him.

"Wait not to find your slippers, but come in your naked feet!"

Surely he, David Noel, should know that song! Why did the princess have naked feet? Why, of course, because she had given away her little white shoes to a beggar!

His first coherent words, after a week of illness, were a whispered plea for some one to buy shoes for the princess.

"There is money," he weakly insisted.
"Plenty of money! I brought it."

A voice like a breeze stirring the music-vine soothed him with a promise to do as he wished.

"White shoes!" he stipulated.

"And pink ones, and blue ones with little tassels," generously promised the caressing voice.

Satisfied, he fell asleep.

When he again awoke his mind was clearer, but he was still in the darkness. Why did he always awake at night, Noel wondered irritably? And why were there no lamps? The horror of a new thought gripped him suddenly, wrenching a cry from him in his helplessness.

Some one came to his side.

"Mr. Noel?" questioned the professional tones of a nurse. "You are in pain?"

"Am I—blind?"

"Oh, no—merely badly bruised."

"I do not believe you," he panted.
"I've seen your breed with wounded men—you're all liars! Where is the other?"

"The other?" stiffly.

"The girl. I heard her the last time—Miss Arloff. Get her!"

A step both light and rapid, fingers that brushed his hand like the brush of a bird's wing.

"I am here," said the delicious, irregular voice of the dancing girl. "What can I do?"

"Give me your hand. Tell me the truth! I am neither a child nor a coward. Am I blind?"

The hand did not tremble in his grasp.

"No. You are not even badly hurt. Soon you will be quite, quite well. Tomorrow the doctor will take off the bandage over your eyes."

"Take it off now!"

She hesitated.

"To-morrow—"

"Now!"

"It would have to go on again until the doctor comes."

"All right!"

The bandage fell away like a black curtain. Dazzled, Noel saw through a mist of pain the face of Rosalind Arloff, luminous with beautiful compassion.

Not even the face of the baby Constance, as she held out to him her gift, was more lovely with pity. Never the hand of a comrade had lain so close and strong with comfort in his clasp as this frail hand of hers. After his long night, she came like sunrise on his heart.

Sunrise, indeed!

For the first time in his life the man met love and looked it in the face, and distinguished it from the boy's dream. Love common as humanity, and as rich with life; love, not as a star, but as the fire on the hearth—this was the revelation that shone upon him like the unbandaging of his eyes.

A princess for his palace—was that the prize of life? No, but this girl's palm warm upon his—this girl beside him for his wife!

When she would have drawn away, he moved his head in protest. He did not speak. Once before he had spoken too soon. The nurse was present, too, and he was physically weak. He could wait.

Rosalind could also wait, it seemed; for she yielded with adorable patience to his mute protest, leaving her hand in his. But now she did not look at him. No matter! He could look at her; and next time he awoke—

On the third day of his recovery, Noel awoke calmly and rationally. It was a sunny morning, and his room was bathed in brilliant yet rosily shaded light. The soft whir of an electric fan hummed in his ears, and a cool air flowed gratefully over him.

When he moved, his luxurious bed soothingly caressed his body, still stiff and sore, but whole. For a while he lay quiet in sheer content, his eyes closed. He saw the white villa in the vivid green of its park, where Rosalind fluttered like a bright humming-bird among her rival flowers. He saw her, in gowns as lovely

as her loveliness, laughing across the table in the stately dining-room hung with the gilded and emblazoned leather beloved of ancient Spain—laughing as sweetly as she had laughed to her father over her meager bread and milk.

His heart swelled as he thought how she denied her healthy young appetite that her father might be tempted with delicate food. How eagerly she had drunk that little glass of orange-juice! And how dull, leaden dull, he had been!

She had forgiven him; he had read that in her eyes. At that memory, Noel's own drowsy optics opened fully.

He was in his own suite of rooms at the hotel. The nurse was sitting by the window, knitting industriously. Through the open door he glimpsed his young friend and secretary, Valdez, busied at a desk heaped with correspondence of a nature which Noel could very well guess. In the dressing-room behind him, he could hear his valet moving about some task. Don David had been returned to his own sphere.

Well, it was no matter; although he had hoped to see Rosalind at once. His cool voice broke abruptly upon the subdued atmosphere of the place.

"Good morning, nurse! I am afraid I was decidedly rude to you yesterday. Will you tell my man that I wish to get up and call Mr. Valdez?"

But Valdez was in the room before the demand was finished. His sallow young face colored with pleasure as he greeted his chief with eager congratulations upon his recovery.

"I was brought here last night?" Noel questioned in the language of their far country.

"Yesterday afternoon, Don David. At first it was judged unwise to move you, and Miss Arloff offered her father's hospitality. That was a frightful fall!"

"The balustrade broke. How did you locate me?"

"The young lady sent word to the hotel, giving your name, and inquiring if your friends were known. That was a

shock to me, *señor*; and poor Benito was a man distracted!"

Noel smiled at the valet hovering in the background. Most people took the man for a Japanese. He was, in fact, a *mestizo*, half Indian, and bound to David Noel by a debt of gratitude that held him in a very slavery of devotion.

"Benito shall dress me presently, Valdez. I shall want the limousine."

The secretary shot a quick glance at the invalid and hesitated.

"Excuse me, Don David—might I venture to ask where you had considered going? I have a reason."

"To call on Miss Arloff," Noel dryly stated. "What is the reason?"

"Again excuse me—I have a message from that lady for your excellency."

"Give it to me!"

It was only an envelope containing a single sheet of a New York newspaper of the previous week. The page was that given over to more or less monotonous items concerning the affairs of the social world. Opposite one such paragraph a cross was roughly splashed in red ink. The marked passage leaped at Noel's attention:

Mrs. Cecil Rhodes Lancaster has arrived on the *Arethusa*, from London, and has taken a suite at the Biltmore. Her late husband, Captain Lancaster, was one of the first English officers to fall in Flanders at the beginning of the present war. Mrs. Lancaster was well known in New York as Miss Constance Berkely Bruce.

So the princess was a widow, and had been for nearly a year!

Noel continued to look at the newspaper, but he saw nothing. To his honor, his thought was pure pity for her—aching pity for the desolate girl-wife, the princess whose little, naked feet had trodden on a sword. He felt a sort of wonder that calamity could fall upon such gentle goodness as hers. He had dreamed of her as set apart from shadows.

The strangeness of it! She had been a widow at the hour when he first learned that she was a wife. The detective might

have told him this, had the inquiry been pursued abroad. What if he had? Would he, Noel, have missed Rosalind?

The name snatched him back to the present. Rosalind had sent him this news. Why? The answer came with the question—because she believed that he loved Constance, and Constance was free.

Noel dropped the paper and turned his face away from the light. His heart leaped up, laughing. Now, now he could prove his love to Rosalind Arloff! Now he could slay the very ghost of that ugly word "substitute," which had caused her to drive him from her presence with blazing scorn and anger. For Constance was free, yet he would go to Rosalind.

Valdez was discreetly conversing with the nurse, but he turned back at his chief's first word.

"I will rise," declared Noel. "Now!"

The face of Valdez was troubled and apprehensive.

"Yes, Don David," he murmured.

"Only I am obliged to say that—that the apartment of the family Arloff is closed."

"Closed?"

"*Señor*, there is no one there. I called an hour ago to express our acknowledgments, and to say you were not injured by your removal. No one was at home. Perhaps to-morrow—"

This was an unexpected delay. Not at home? The idea was nonsense, in view of the invalid around whom the household life was centered. No doubt Rosalind was out, at her work, and the old Abel did not answer the bell. Well, Abel would open to him!

Noel overruled a general protest that followed his renewed determination to rise at once. Life ran strong within him. After he was up and dressed, however, he found himself compelled to rest for a time in an armchair. He was more shaken than he had believed possible.

A visit from the doctor delayed him a second time; so it was late afternoon, as at his last going, when Noel finally came into the street. Valdez was with him, chiefly because Noel found it easier to

take that gentleman than to induce him to stay at home. He would leave the secretary to wait in the limousine, at Rosalind's door; and the support of his arm was not unwelcome.

The drive steadied and refreshed Noel, instead of tiring him. When they reached the dingy house in the dull street, he nodded a cheerful farewell to Valdez and went up the steps with quite his usual verve.

The card marked "Vasili Arloff" was no longer over the bell in the hall. Noel was unreasonably startled by its disappearance; nor was he calmed when the door of the apartment remained shut, though he rang the bell and ascended the stairs to knock repeatedly. Foreboding crept coldly to his side.

After moments of indecision, he tried the door. It opened at a touch, and showed him emptiness! He faced a bare, unfurnished room.

For a space he was bewildered to the point of actual giddiness. He had been ill, and the shock was great. But by and by pain and understanding drew out of the mist, hand in hand, twin figures. She had, then, meant her fiery assertion that she never would marry him; and because she had seen resolution in his face, she had fled beyond his finding. She had not sent him to Constance Lancaster in fine generosity, but in indifference; at most, in pity for his obsession.

David Noel had been very sure of himself, with the arrogant yet pardonable sureness of a man who has wrested magnificent success from his world. Now that arrogance was a garment hanging in rags about him, as he stood, a man rejected and thrust out the gates. The dancing girl would have none of him! She would not have him, nor his gifts, nor his feet upon her threshold. She had withdrawn herself like an empress offended.

The sun was low. Its level rays shot across the vacant room and into the room beyond. Surely something glittered there! The golden ray had found some echoing brightness not a part of naked walls.

Was it a thing forgotten? Prompted by the vague relief of any action, Noel walked across the dusty floor.

The French doll, Anitra, sat on a mantel-shelf in all her finery, with a perpetual smile on her bisque lips, and her bisque arms extended straight in front of her, as if to display a bracelet of pale blue ribbon around her left wrist. In her lap lay some white bulk, half covered by a small handkerchief.

Even his doll was abandoned as contaminated! That was Noel's first bitter thought. He stood staring at it sullenly, when an odd pendant to the ribbon bracelet attracted his glance. He stooped to look.

Swung from the silk band was a child's ring—a cheap little ring, set with a bit of greenish, Indian-carved turquoise.

With a harsh exclamation, Noel wrenched the ribbon free. The ring slipped off the silk into his palm, and lay there, a most diminutive trifle of ornament. It was the ring that he, the boy David, had bought from a Yaqui Indian at Vera Cruz and given to the princess.

But how came it here—here, on Rosalind Arloff's doll? Did she, then, know Constance? Were they kin to each other, and could their resemblance be so explained?

What was it that the inscrutable Anitra had in her lap? A handkerchief, with a rose embroidered in one corner by way of initial, and as faintly scented as a rose-leaf; and underneath the handkerchief a pair of wee, time-yellowed shoes of white kid as fine and soft as satin!

The truth blazed upon David Noel, a blinding and merciless light. Not the unknown Constance was the princess of the royal heart, but Rosalind, Rosalind!

The long trail of the little shoes had led him straight back to the feet of the dancing princess; and he, fool, idiot, dumb brute, had not known her—had insulted her, patronized her, and condescended to her—had lost her!

He covered his eyes and leaned against the wall, scorched and seared by the flame

of his self-contempt. The bluebird of happiness had flown to his hand, and he had driven it away!

CHAPTER IX

THE STORY OF ROSALIND

DOWN in the limousine, Valdez smoked innumerable cigarettes and smiled wisely at the evening sky. Don David had found the beauty at home, he mused. Being in love himself with at least three ladies simultaneously, Valdez was all sympathy and interest; but he was beginning to think of his dinner-hour, fast approaching. People in love were inconsiderate!

It was altogether dark before his chief emerged from the house. There was nothing of the happy lover in Noel's white face.

"Home!" he ordered, and spoke no more than that curt monosyllable of defeat.

For a long time Noel had been too stunned to imagine how this amazing situation could have come about. Little by little, his brain had cleared as he leaned beside the doll in the gray room.

As a boy, he had inquired of neighborhood servants about the house on Madison Avenue, and had asked who the little girl was. He had been told that that was the old Bruce house, and that the little girl was Miss Constance. He never had thought that there might be more than one little girl—a relative, or a guest. She had seemed so much at home, so well established there. The gentleman who bought back the shoes she had given away had taken them into that same house.

As that fugitive recollection flitted across his mind, Noel had cried out in the dark. Blind, indeed, and doubly blind! For that dark-eyed, smiling gentleman, who had given David Noel the ten dollars which lay at the base of high fortune, was Vasili Arloff—Vasili Arloff in his splendid prime, who yet had time to heed a shivering boy on the street!

Oh, if the Great House of the Little Shoes could have held those two guests! Oh, shining mountain-peak which he himself had missed!

"You are ill, Don David?" murmured the anxious voice of Valdez.

"Yes — no," said Noel hoarsely. "Wait! Tell the chauffeur to drive to the Biltmore Hotel."

"But you are ill! You rose too soon after the accident. To-morrow, *señor!*"

"Now!"

The secretary was forced to obey, however reluctantly. The car swung north.

Noel had remembered that he knew the address of Mrs. Lancaster from the newspaper. Since she and the princess had once been children in one household, perhaps she could tell him something of Rosalind now. There was still so much that he did not understand.

At the Biltmore, Valdez went in, to return with the information that the Hon. Mrs. Lancaster had gone to her permanent home, which had been redecorated and made ready for her. The address was that of the house Noel knew so well, on Madison Avenue. The car turned south again.

It was strange to leave his own automobile before that house; strange to climb boldly those brownstone steps. The goldfish were no longer in the window. Instead, a nude statue gleamed whitely between the curtains. A servant received his card, and left Noel in a small reception-room.

Mrs. Lancaster would see him. In fact, she came to him. Noel judged from sounds and voices that guests were assembled for a dinner in the drawing-room.

Constance Lancaster was a robust and handsome young woman, wearing a black dinner-gown that could scarcely be called suggestive of grief or mourning. She greeted Noel with practised ease and correctness, giving him his South American military title, which few North Americans knew or used outside of diplomatic circles. A faint odor of before-dinner cocktails invested her with the final touch

of difference from the poor little princess of the meager bread-and-milk supper. She was so different as to confuse Noel's first replies to her.

"I am glad to see that you are about again after your accident, General Noel," she remarked. "I heard it spoken of in Washington last week."

"Thank you," he said, recovering himself. "The accident occurred when I was leaving the house of Mr. Vasili Arloff. When I called there to-day I found the family gone. Would you be so good as to tell me where I can find them? My need of doing so is my excuse for disturbing you at this hour."

She looked him through keenly.

"You fancied I would know?"

"I hoped—"

"I have not seen my cousin Rosalind since she was seventeen."

"She was your cousin?"

"Yes. You are interested in finding her, General Noel?"

"I hoped to make her my wife," he bluntly answered.

Mrs. Lancaster was both shrewd and good-natured. The South American millionaire was a family connection worth securing. She leaned back in her chair.

"I have fifteen minutes before dinner. What can I tell you?"

"Everything, please!"

It was not a very long history. The father of Constance and Rosalind's mother had been brother and sister. When Vasili Arloff dazzled the eyes of New York, like a bright meteor, young Rosa Bruce met him and loved him. Or, rather, he loved her. The flattered and vainly sought Vasili, the petted and indifferent favorite, fell as humbly and passionately in love as a schoolboy.

The girl's family was horrified as at a disgrace. What—a Bruce marry a foreign dancer? They hurried the young girl out of the city as from the plague.

Vasili followed her, and married her a month after their first meeting. In two years Rosalind was born, and the young mother died.

There had been a reconciliation between Rosa Arloff and her family. The young wife made it her last demand of Vasili that their daughter should be given to her grandmother, to be reared as a Bruce, and not an Arloff. By an irony of life, it was the man of the stage who had been faithful, and the daughter of Puritans who had repented their marriage and looked backward in discontent.

However sharply wounded, Vasili had kept the bond, only exacting his right to visit his baby daughter every day.

What Rosa had denied, Rosalind gave. As soon as the little girl could think or speak, all her childish devotion was spent upon her father. She loved every one, but she adored him.

When she was eleven years old, however, his visits ceased without warning or explanation.

"M. Arloff is in Europe," was her grandmother's cold response to the little girl's tearful demands.

Nothing more was told her.

The years passed in careful education of the cousins Constance and Rosalind for their exalted place in the world. Then, when Rosalind was seventeen, she met on the street her father's protégé, Abel. For the first time she learned of the accident that had left Vasili Arloff a cripple, poor, and with a memory maimed like his beautiful body.

There had been a scene between Mrs. Bruce and her youngest granddaughter, with words violent as blows.

To Rosalind was offered her choice—all that her world could give of pleasure and ease, or starvation with her father. Her decision was instant, and she went to Vasili Arloff that night.

"And that is all," concluded Mrs. Lancaster. "We never heard from her. Of course, I was frightfully upset, and I really believe it hastened grandmother's death. But, wild as Rosalind was, General Noel, we must allow for much. She was half of Vasili's blood, poor child."

"Fortunately for me," said Noel, with a sarcasm that he could not curb. "I am

a plebeian, you see. I am very grateful, Mrs. Lancaster, and I will not trespass further upon your time and kindness."

"I wonder—" she began, staring at him speculatively. "But, of course, that is impossible!"

"What is that?"

"Why, when Rosalind was a little thing, she used to prattle of some one she called her Shivering Boy. She used to watch at the window for him until grandmama forbade it. I am five years older, so I remember more. Surely—"

Noel evaded any answer. Somehow, he got out of the house and back to the car; but there he had to admit himself at the end of his endurance for that night. Valdez, seriously alarmed, hurried him back to their hotel.

CHAPTER X

THE SHIVERING BOY

"I HOPE you may always be as happy as you are kind!"

David Noel started awake next morning, at dawn, with that sentence ringing as clearly in his brain as if it had just been spoken beside him. He looked incredulously around the empty room before he was satisfied of the trick that fancy had played him.

She was not there, the girl who had so gently answered his gross rudeness that first night. How should she be there? He had outworn even the patience of a princess.

Noel sank wearily back on his pillows. The night had stripped him of his last arrogance. It was not that Rosalind had escaped out of his reach. With the resources in his power, he knew that he could find her. But dared he try to do so?

The humility of the boy in the street had come back to him too late. How could he plead faithful love, who had denied and insulted her? And what else had he to offer? He knew better than to suppose that his wealth could sway the girl who had left the Bruce household to

toil in a dancing-school for Vasili Arloff's bread.

And yet she had cared for him in those days after his accident. Was that pure charity? Surely he had read forgiveness in her eyes when the bandage was lifted from his own!

But she had gone from her home to avoid him, and by Anitra's hand had consigned him to the bitter punishment of knowledge of his great mistake. Could her flight have any other meaning?

With a low exclamation, Noel started erect. When she had wished him happiness, he had already told her of the House of the Little Shoes. She must have known him; he had been a youth, not a boy, when she last saw him—when he took that daring kiss from her lips. She had known that he loved her image—and she wished him happiness. But happiness meant herself!

Self-confidence and hope came flooding into his spirit. What if he had offended a second and a third time? Surely it was not in vindictiveness, but as a sign of possible pardon, that she had left him the doll. When had she been wantonly cruel? Cruelty it would have been to taunt him too late with the knowledge that she was the princess of his dreams.

Noel struck the bell for Benito so that it tinkled a very clamor of haste and exultation. It was so early that the watchful Valdez was still asleep. With a ridiculous sense of freedom, Noel went out into the street alone.

He meant to go to the dancing-school where the exquisite daughter of Vasili strove to teach some of her grace to duller creatures. As he signaled a taxicab he remembered Anitra, whom he had ungalantly deserted after despoiling her of her bracelet and the magic shoes. Suppose the doll held some further message, unnoticed in his agitation and in the dusk of the previous night? He gave the chauffeur the address of the old house near Washington Square.

No one hindered his entrance. He observed that the black walnut stair-rail,

broken by his fall, had been mended with cheap, new wood, painted dark. That was how he had tried to patch his romance, and luckily failed, he thought, recalling those months of aimless search for a wife. What a self-sufficient cad he had been!

The door of the apartment stood open. As Noel strode in, a slight figure came from the room beyond. It was Rosalind Arloff, with the doll in her arms.

She halted like an arrested sunbeam on the threshold. The morning brightness was all about her, tangled in her shining curls, glinting in her wide eyes, tinting warmly her pure pallor.

"Oh!" she faltered. "Oh!"

All the way there, Noel had been planning with desperate anxiety what he would say to her when she was found; what words he would choose to hold her while he made his plea for pardon and another trial. He had not forgotten his last dismissal. Now he met her frightened gaze, and was beside her with a movement as unpremeditated as a drawn breath. To his knee he went, catching both her small, fair hands and resting his tired eyes against their cool softness.

"Rosalind," he said, "it is the beggar again. Princess, be kind to a shivering heart!"

Anitra slipped to the floor between them. Her wax eyelids fell shut, as if to close out the ingratitude of these two human beings brought together through her agency alone.

"Yes," said Rosalind, quite innocently. "Yes, since you came to me first. If you had gone first to Constance—never, never, never!"

By which speech the embittered Anitra might have judged the princess safe from too arid perfection.

After a time Rosalind grew serious once more. She set both hands on Noel's breast to hold him sufficiently away from her to permit coherent intercourse.

"I knew you, David, before I spoke to you at that hotel window. Are you quite sure you understand? I never would have

gone to that dance with you—no, never—if I had not known that you were you! Not even though I wanted the doll with all my heart! You do not think lightly of me for that, now? You never will?”

“Have I not been punished enough by your leaving me, Rosalind, without that question?”

“Oh, but I did not really leave you! I only moved us all across the hall, because I *had* to know whether you truly wanted me myself.”

“I want nothing else in all the world!”

“But I must tell you. Your name, David, was written on the box that held the turquoise ring you gave me so long ago. Had you forgotten? Papa knew all about you when we were children. Perhaps he even helped me a little to remember you at first. He always declared that he had seen the spirit of all the great lovers of the world in your poor, thin face and hollow eyes. You know that you have become a very distinguished person now. Of late years he and I have read all the things printed about you—magnificent things, general! We read in the newspapers when you arrived in New York, and I saw your picture. And—and perhaps I wondered if you remembered the little girl you had the outrageous rudeness to kiss!”

“You know my life has been one memory,” he answered, unsteadied by a flood of happiness.

“Very well, sir! Nevertheless, when I

introduced you to papa that evening, he remembered you so well that I was afraid every moment he would betray me to the superb gentleman who did not want the dancing girl at all.”

“Will he forgive me, too? My dear, my dear, will you come with me to your own house? You and he, forever?”

“And Abel? You do not know Abel yet—how he was loyal and good to my father when all the brilliant friends and flatterers drifted away. He was a composer of beautiful music, David. When my father was a very young man, he saved Abel from a terrible massacre, and after that he always kept him as a companion. Abel wrote wonderful ballets for him, too. Abel shall come with us?”

“If he will so far honor our home, it is his. Rosalind, I have been so long alone; tell me again that I am to have you!”

She lifted to his gaze the clear beauty of her face.

“Did I not tell you that the woman whom you loved so long and well must feel your thoughts like a strong river rushing about her; must have vague dreams by night which shut her away from other men by day? Oh, David, I only told you what I had felt and known, from the day when I gave you the shoes until now. And all the time you thought of Constance!”

“Not of Constance,” denied David Noel, stooping his face to hers, “but of you, my constant princess!”

THE END

THE TOUCH

Love, when I touch your hand,
I know that you understand!

Just a tender touch—
So little, yet so much!

The speech of heart to heart
That has no counterpart!

Love, when I touch your hand,
I know that you understand!

Clinton Scollard